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Title: Leadership Development in an Arab Context: The Case of Syria

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Leadership Development in an Arab Context: The Case of Syria

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Abstract

Leadership development is adopted as a strategy to become a learning organisation. The emphasis on leadership or transfer of leadership training is perceived as central to the development of a learning organisation, which is the only sustainable competitive advantage in response to an increasingly unpredictable business environment. Leadership development may be seen as oriented towards building capacity in anticipation of unforeseen challenges. In this vein, developing leadership behaviours/capabilities might be a priority for successful organisations. This suggests that organisations should be able to develop their leaders by ensuring the harmony between the requirements of corporate strategy and the context in which they work. Given the fact that leadership is such essential part of organisational development, the methods for developing the leadership behaviours/capabilities must be present. Without defining leadership behaviours/capabilities, and their development methods, organisations may fail to optimize the outcomes of their leadership. This indicates the importance for understanding how leadership development (LD) is approached. Consequently, this study explores how LD occurs and what factors influence this phenomenon in the Arab context using evidence from Syria, and develops an integrated model to support the introduction of LD to organisations operating in the Syrian/Arab context.

This study utilises a qualitative multiple-case design to understand and explain the character of and the influence on LD in the Arab world using evidence from Syria. Specifically, the study was based upon a sample of three cases of for-profit companies. Research data was gathered through 36 in-depth semi-structured interviews with the middle and top management levels.

The findings reveal that LD occurs through the process that begins once a company identifies its leadership needs. This occurs by analysing internal/external environment to select the leadership behaviours/capabilities required, and their development methods. It was noted that this process seems to be similar among the three companies, but the type of behaviour/capabilities required tends to be context specific. Additionally, the findings reveal that there were two types of factors that influence LD at the three companies: Factors were seen as determinant factors through which the decisions of whether to introduce LD were made; and factors influencing the successful application of LD. The findings also reveal that

there is a dynamic interaction between the mechanism used for understanding the weakness to identify leadership needs from one side and the context in which the companies operate from the other side. This relationship poses the basis for each company to select what fits its internal/external needs. This was evident through the types of behaviours/capabilities required and the purpose of each development method adopted by each company for developing the behaviours/capabilities required.

The findings provide several contributions, but the major contribution is the discovery of how LD is applied in an Arab context, what behaviours/capabilities and development methods work best with for-profit companies in this context, how companies operating in an Arab context identify leadership needs for development, and what factors they perceive as determinants of LD and what factors influence the implications of LD.

The study makes an additional contribution by developing an empirical model for introducing LD in an Arab context using evidence from Syria. The model was based on the data obtained from the field study. This could be appropriate for the Syrian/Arab context from one side that shares the same traditional characteristics, and companies working in these contexts (Arab) from the other side.

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The Research Degrees Committee of the University of Bedfordshire has signed off the award on 20 January 2015. This is the final and approved form of the dissertation.

Leadership Development in An Arab Context: The Case of Syria

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Ph.D. at the University of Bedfordshire.

It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this study is on leadership development (LD) in the Arab World. At the outset of this introductory chapter, justifications for this focus are presented through the existence of weaknesses or gaps in the current literature on LD. The next section details the main aim of the study, supporting objectives and research questions. This is followed by a brief explanation of the research methodology utilised and, finally, an outline of the structure of the thesis.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

For achieving specific objectives of companies, there is a need for strong leadership capabilities at different levels that help to face the environment changes surrounding them more than ever before (Fulmer and Bleak, 2008; Murrell, 2005). Adapting to uncertain environments requires specific leadership behaviours/capabilities (Martineau and Patterson, 2010; Weiss et al, 2007; Kotter, 2001) and building a strong LD is seen as a priority for strategic companies in today's business (Yearout et al, 2001; Daft and Lane, 2007; Surdulli et al, 2012) because LD is being a strategic initiative in response to environment challenges. In this regard, this shows the importance for specific LD methods/activities that help to build and develop the leadership behaviours/capabilities required, which are regarded as core competences of corporations (Aitken and Higgs, 2010; Lussier and Achua, 2010). As a result, the application of leadership development acquires as much an importance for local and foreign organisations operating in developing countries as it is for their counterparts in developed countries (Fox, 2006).

More generally, comprehensive reviews of LD methods have been provided by Conger (1992), Cacioppe (1998), Conger and Benjamin (1999), Fulmer *et al* (2000), Hartley and Hinksman, (2003), Hernez-Broome and Hughes (2004), and Giber *et al* (2009). LD methods have been also derived from the extant research informed especially by reviews and meta-analyses (i.e. Collins 2001; Day 2001; Kur and Burnning 2002). According to these reviews and meta-analyses, the common LD methods that have been accepted in the literature include 360-degree feedback; executive coaching; job assignments; action learning; job rotation, networking, and mentoring. In this regard, "one size fits all" approach to LD may not be applied on all people, organisations, and countries (Weir, 2010). He claims that transferring LD practices to other countries requires taking into consideration several issues. For example, what strategy should be adopted, locating, organising business units, and becoming familiar with what influence their human resource development in context-specific because this may require understanding their requirements for designing LD programmes and understanding the elements shaping the way of how people in context-specific develop as leaders (Weir, 2010).

According to Hall and Soskice, (2001), the different practices used by companies in different countries that deal with training and development are likely to be disappear because countries are rapidly becoming more convergent in their best practices. But LD practices reflect a set of the differences regarding industrial infrastructure and the institutional system that shape the companies' strategies for adopting skills and the product market type (Boyer, 1990). For instance, Lane (1989:34) states that “although organizational goals may not differ significantly across organizations, courses of action towards reaching these goals do, because action is socially constructed and hence shaped by culture as manifested in societal institutions.

It is argued that domestic, international, multi-national (MNCs)and global companies cannot follow a convergent process for leadership development, so identifying the behaviours/capabilities for successful organisational leaders is a complex task (Sullivan, 2004; Connerley and Pedersen, 2005) because the complexity of business environments requires different set of leadership behaviours/capabilities in today’s organisations (D'Amato *et al*, 2009); and likely requires specific leadership behaviours/capabilities (MacGillivray, 2006). Others argue that complexities and challenges encountered people, organisations, and countries in today's business world constitute rich source of learning, but learning leadership by developmental methods from all business types tends to be questionable because not all business types have tendency toward training/development (McCauley and Brutus, 1998).

Consequently, successful organizations that operate globally address the concept of leadership development from a global mind-set (Chowdhury et al, 2003; Oddou and Mendenhall, 2008) because most empirical studies recommend that it should pay attention to the sensitivity of cultural diversity. This carries importance for adopting leadership competencies that meet the challenges in dynamic and uncertain environments (Couillard, 2006; Daft, 2012), such as, Arab Context.

Developing leadership requires understanding the way in which companies operating in an Arab context implement their LD more than ever before (Wilson, 2012) for two reasons: 1) after the Arab Spring, the Arab political-economic system saw new changes because the countries that were targeted by the Arab Spring were divided into rich and poor countries, but political-economic corruption has made the power and money controlled by small group of people and has made no difference between Arabs in poor and rich countries. This increased the needs for experts in order to develop leadership skills in an Arab context in most sectors. 2) The discovery in late 2010 of the huge natural gas bonanza off eastern Mediterranean shores is triggering Western countries to invest in this discovery. The results revealed that the entire eastern Mediterranean is located over huge untapped oil and gas reserves. This discovery has positive implications on the stability of Arab countries in the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa in the next three decades. The reason is because this area will be the heart of world. This has been evident in the Arab Gulf countries that have been characterised by their stability over the last five decades. This may attract global companies to invest in this part of the world not only in gas sector, but other sectors, and help to increase the demand for foreign experts and training and development programmes in Human Resource Development in general and managerial leadership in particular (Mehchy and Doko, 2010).

1.3. GAPS IN THELITERATURE

The increased interest by academics and practitioners in leadership has led to fast growth in leadership studies. Successful organizations today, it is argued, need strong leadership capability at all levels (Fulmer and Bleak, 2008). This also leads to increase the need of LD. In this regard, it may be argued that the importance of LD lies in the fact that it has grown in response to the changing nature of organizations, advances in management theory, and business environments and social trends around the world (Gallos, 2008).

However, a significant gap in the literature exists as most studies have been conducted in advanced industrial economies, especially those in the West (Goethals *et al*, 2004; Dwivedi, 1995), little research attention has been paid to LD in the developing world and the Arab world in particular (Abdalla and Al-Homoud, 1995), despite of their strategic and economic importance to Western countries (Madsen, 2010; United Nations, 2009). This is evident by a set of changes in Arab context because of globalisation. Therefore, governments have faced rapid challenges to fulfil their commitment, duties, and roles particularly in economic development. This raised the role of for-profit sector as a priority for economic reform and became a fundamental partner to governments in economic and social development (Arab Labour Organization, 2008). The development that occurred in the recent change to a social-market economy in the Arab states in the last three decades and the accompanying economic and legal reforms resulted on attracting more foreign investments. Accordingly, this helped to increase the demand for foreign experts and development programmes in for-profit sector and even state sectors for managerial leadership (Mehchy and Doko, 2010). The research, however, has not specifically determined the LD required for managers and their companies in a specific sector in an Arab context, particularly, the role of for-profit sector in economy and development as a partner with, and beyond the government sector continues to increase (UNDP, 2003). In turn, there has been little prior published academic research evaluating LD in this context because many of employees working in Arab settings are from nations with Arab-derivative cultures that share many of the leadership paradigms, thinking, beliefs, and experience.

There is also a general gap in the literature concerning the factors influencing LD in specific organisational context in general and in a specific Arab country in particular because the sensitivity to cultural issues tends to be different from country to another, even in Arab countries sharing the same cultural characteristics (Common, 2011; Hollinshead and Leat, 1995). So the current leadership literature lacks sufficient investigations on the national-cultural factors influencing the application of LD practices from one side, and the relationship between the institutional components and their implications for the form of LD from the other side in a specific Arab country. This is because the obligation to the institutional-cultural aspects tends to be divergent-convergent in Arab countries (Barakat, 1993; Hickson and Pugh, 1995; Haddad, 1998; Robertson et al, 2001).

Another gap in the literature is that Arab contexts showed interest and attention to LD methods through a variety of actors from different sectors, their numbers and types, their differences in terms of the methodology, pedagogy, target group, stated goals, funding source, and assessment tool (Arado, 2011; Al-Dabbagh and Assad, 2010); but HRM, in Arab world, is still relatively under investigation (Mashood *et al*, 2009; Al-Hamadi *et al*, 2007). Additionally, a number of scholars have observed that there are few empirical studies that address the key themes and problems around LD (Weir, 2010; Common, 2011; Metcalfe and Mimouni, 2012; Weir, 2003a; Weir, 2003b; Weir, 2000; Al-Falah, 1987; Abu-Doleh and Weir, 1997). Therefore, there is a need for understanding the nature of the development methods required and their purposes in this spot from the world.

Another gap is that leadership research in Arab world has been categorized in three ways: Westernized, Arabized, and Islamicized (Ali, 1990), and the Western leadership theories are the source of leadership behaviours/capabilities (Storey, 2004; Bolden *et al*, 2003), but there is little research on Western behaviours/capabilities used in the companies operating in Arab contexts.

A further gap is that non-local companies operating in Syria/Arab context are moving to implement Western LD practices, but the extent to which these companies are adopting similar approaches to the LD with those classified as local companies in Arab world is unknown.

1.4. REARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to understand and explain the character of and influences on LD in the Arab World, using evidence from the for-profit sector in Syria.

Research objectives of the study are based on the purpose of the study and derived from the review of related literature presented in the next chapter. The objectives of this study are:

- To identify concepts from the literature on leadership and LD that can be used to describe, interpret and explain these phenomena.
- To engage critically with arguments and evidence in the published literature that help evaluate how ideas in Western leadership commentary may be tested for applicability in Arab contexts.
- To sample and source units of analysis within Syria as an example context for evaluating factors around LD in the Arab world, using a primary data set assembled for this purpose.
- To draw conclusions from the empirical analysis to contribute to the evolution of theory regarding LD in Arab contexts.

1.5. STUDY SCOPE

The scope of the study is to understand and explain the character of and influences on LD through in-depth interviews. This study involves perceptions, theories, and practices of the subjects related to LD; however, other information from other field research that served the aim of this study was included. These multiple case studies targeted only for-profit sector using evidence from service sector in Syria. The findings of this study are limited to the Arab context and cannot be generalised to non-Arab contexts. This delimitation on the scope of the study was essential for understanding how ideas in Western LD are applied in an Arab context.

As delimitations are utilised to reduce the scope of this study or to list what is intended in this research (Creswell, 2005), the participants in this study were from the middle and top leadership levels because they are best able to provide rich data on LD. Also, delimiting the scope of the study to three for profit companies was necessary to reduce the range of factors that need to be controlled for in interpreting findings.

1.6. STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of eight chapters. The current introductory chapter provides some background to the topic under investigation; introduces a summary of the gaps in the literature, presents the aim, objectives and research questions of the study, indicates the scope of the study, and outlines the structure of the thesis.

In chapter two, the literature review provides review of leadership theory and its relation to LD, and highlights the concept of leadership and LD. Also, it addresses the leadership behaviours/capabilities required, and the development methods required for developing leadership. This chapter also highlights the perceived needs for leadership development followed by discussing the contextual influences on LD. The last section in this chapter addresses leadership in an Arab context.

The methodology chapter addresses research philosophy with an outline of research paradigms by comparison with the selected one, a justification for interpretivism paradigm for this research, a justification for case study methodology, and the quality of case study design, the quality of case study methodology, discussion on selecting multiple case studies with holistic design followed by discussion of the literal and theoretical replication. The following section is data collection procedures including: case study protocol, criteria of research country, for-profit sector, interviewees, and data collection, which is divided into two parts: semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. This section also addresses data analysis and then the limitation for case study followed by ethical consideration. Chapter four addresses within case analysis and begins with the LICT case. Chapter five addresses the Af-Ro case. Chapter six addresses the S-Tel case. Chapter seven addresses synthesis analysis and findings of the three cases. Chapter eight is a conclusion chapter which reviews the aim/objectives of this study and findings, suggests LD framework, highlights the implications for practices and research, and ends with personal reflection of the researcher.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter initiates with general reviews of the relevant leadership theories and their link to LD. This is followed by a discussion of the concept of LD. The framework of this chapter addresses four main topics: leadership behaviours/capabilities; the LD methods; the identifying leadership needs for development and the contextual influences on LD. The last section addresses leadership and LD in Arab context.

2.2. LEADERSHIP THEORIES

To present a debate on LD without any discussion on the concept of leadership would lack credibility. This section reviews the ideas around leadership literature, but without defining how the researcher interprets this phenomenon or describes each stage in this supposedly linear pathway because it would be difficult to consider its development.

Trait theory assumes that some individuals have extraordinary characteristics and personality traits that differ from others and qualify them to be leaders, such as intelligence, self-confidence, integrity, five-factor personality, and sociability (Northouse, 2010). But such theory have been criticised because it is difficult to generalize to other contexts (Bratton, et al, 2005); and the characteristics that stem from this theory are mainly traits traditionally associated with males (Lazzari, et al, 2009).

Behavioural theories wove their theoretical strands from the principles of scientific management (Aemstrong, 2012). Behaviourists attempted to examine the interaction between managers and their workers. This assumes that leaders can better lead their people if they understand the interaction between humans and the effective way for their interactions; as Taylor (1967:2010) puts it, the development of science “involves the establishment of many rules, laws and formulae which replace the judgement of the individual workman and which can be effectively used only after having been systematically recorded” (p.28). This perspective proposes that the nature of the environment is considered to be scientifically verifiable.

Contingency theory indicates that leadership role is determined based on the situation and followers’ requirements, and even other contextual variables, so the core of contingency approach is that certain types of situations (task), followers 'contextual variables' require also appropriate leadership styles. This assumes that leader "should take account of the both internal situation in an organisation and the external context in which an organisation operates" (Fidler 2000:403). However, it has been criticised in terms of the inability to explain what organisations should do when there is a mismatch between the situation and a leader in the workplace; and why certain leaders with certain behaviours are more effective in some contexts than others (Northouse, 2010).

Systematic theory helps to identify the complexity of the situation to stretch the leadership thinking; especially in terms of openness and extensive communication. It views leadership as an open concept due to exchanging everything with its environment (see section 2.3). For Martens (2011), understanding system occurs by contemplating the whole, rather than focussing on the individual parts, and taking the system as it is to see what leaders do. This provides a big picture of leader's awareness, rather than a simple picture of what leaders are good at. This occurs through moving "up-and-out" of system thinking rather than "down-and-in" (Peter, 2010). However, this approach is criticised by (Gibson and Birkinshaw, 2004) because systems theory realizes the changes in one part of an organization that tends to influence its other parts.

Transformational theory has roots in charismatic leadership concerned with the personality characteristics, but it overlooks the socially constructed interaction that occurs between leaders and their followers. Burns (1978) referred to the differences between transformational/transactional leadership in political leadership through the ability of leader to reach the outcome from using intrinsic motivation and inspiration, and through transactional leadership from using different kinds of rewards. Bass (1985) developed this theory by MLQ to measure leaders' transactional/transformational aspects. Conger and Kanungo (1999) proposed that transformative leaders should evaluate their followers and environment conditions before making a decision on the level of transformational leadership. However it was criticised because of considering the behavioural and traits models of traditional leadership (Bratton et al, 2005)**.** By avoiding other leadership characteristics, transformative leadership is likely to be seen as similar to the traits approach.

In constructivist theory, the work of Foucault (1980:98) was the base of the constructivist leadership researchers that indicated that "power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation, and not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power". For Grint (2005), leaders' power and control can be exercised by many ways. Typically, most studies define leadership as a more positive force (influence), and distinguishes it from negative forces (power). Therefore, leadership represents the key of the relationship between context, leaders, and their followers. Thus, followers are overlooked in this leadership equation despite leaders cannot lead without followers, so followers often play an essential role toward leadership failure or success (Shankman and Allen, 2007). Additionally, constructionist views may go beyond its focus on followers because of being able to raise positive views of constituting and reforming leadership based on current individual views. Carroll and Levy (2010) argue that social construction inquiry has the potential not only to reform the theoretical understanding of LD, but to re-freshen and challenge its practice.

Consequently, leadership theory, during its development, has been associated with the theory of LD based on the weaknesses of each theory. Thus it may be suggested that the development of leadership occurred while the theory of leadership was developing at each stage.

2.3. THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The concept of leadership has been investigated from different perspectives, but this section considers the approaches that may help to explain and understand the notion of LD. According to Alimo-Metcalfe and Lawler (2001), leadership has been ill-defined in the organisations that they investigated, and that is a real problem for LD. The lack of clear definitions, models, and approaches of leadership has negative implications on LD practices because the type of leadership may differ based on organisations' needs. Furthermore, the combination between the concepts of leadership and management may lead to the fact that LD may be approached as a traditional management development (Kotter, 1998; Rost, 1998; Bennis and Goldsmith, 2010; Yukl, 2010).

Day (2001) claims that understanding the difference between managers and leaders helps to understand the purposes of LD, and found overlap between management development and LD. However, he argues that LD tends to involve building individuals' capabilities, while management development focuses on improving task performance in management functions.

Additionally, the common leadership models for LD in the last two decades include the transformational leadership model (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Judge and Piccolo, 2004;

Northouse, 2010; Conger and Kanungo, 1999), which has various implications on the areas of LD.
One approach that has attracted a great attention in the last three decades focuses on personal characteristics of leaders that include leader behaviours capabilities, styles and personality (Yukl, 2010; Northouse 2010), and gender differences of individual leaders (Ayman, 1993; Eagly and Johnson, 1990). However, the development of leaders in isolation of context is ineffective and leads to failure in achieving the desired outcomes of LD (Bolden, 2005; Strorey, 2011; Grint, 2005; Hartley, 2010), thus, this approach is criticised because it places its focus on the personal development at the expense of collective.

Another approach of leadership considers this phenomenon as a specialised role. An individual who has the responsibility to complete a specialised role in leadership is perceived as a leader (Gatrell and White, 2006). However, leadership is perceived, as more than responsibilities in a specialised role because there are different leaders for different roles across managerial levels (Champoux, 2010; Mayer et al, 2009). For example, Gill (2006) distinguishes between leadership and strategic leadership in terms of leadership role, and notes that leadership refers to leaders at different organisational levels; while strategic leadership refers to leaders at the top level of the organisation. This has implications on LD because designing LD programme defines leadership solely, and this will make the programme focuses on a specific role rather than others.

Another approach addresses leadership as processes that occur among individuals, groups and organisations. It addresses leadership in terms of influence, motivation, and achievement. Scholars investigated the concepts of transformational-transactional leadership due to their application to specific themes of management, leadership, and organisational development (Bass and Avolio, 1994). The differences between transformational and transactional leadership represents the relationship between leaders and followers (Peters, 2010). Transactional leadership tends to be influential through the use of rewards for compliance and loyalty; while transformational leadership is based on the influence by depending on raising the priorities and the needs of followers for accomplishment, and motivating them to perform more than their expectations (Bass, 1999; Judge and Piccolo, 2004). Incidentally, this approach is widely used as competency framework into LD in today's organisations because it considers both human and social capitals (Day, 2001).

This conception was noted by studies that refer to the differences between manager development and management development; or leader development and LD. For example, some scholars insist that the difference between these approaches is significant, because leader development emphasizes the acquisition or enhancement of intrapersonal competencies, whereas leadership requires an interpersonal and relational context (Day and O'Connor, 2003), thus, leader development has been considered as an individual level and LD has been considered as collective level (Altman *et al*, 2010). This may suggest that developing individual leaders does not necessarily translate into better leadership. This may agree with Storey's (2011) idea that LD is rooted in leadership theories, and understanding LD is related to any changes upon leadership theories. Day (2001) observes that understanding early LD was interrelated also with an understanding of early leadership theories that considered individual leaders. He indicates that although the conceptual distinction between leader development and LD is valuable, there is a fundamental need for bridging leader development and LD. In fact, (Day, 2001; Latham and Sejits, 1998) claim that both types of development are important, but Day (2001, 2011) states that there is little attention paid to LD as a collective process.

Day (2001) criticised leadership development and distinguished it from leader development. The traditional leadership has been searched in term of behaviours, and conceptualised as individual-level knowledge, abilities, and skills. This contradicts with the view that building individual leaders via developing a range of skills or abilities to ensure that leadership will occur (Conger, 1992), an individual is seen as a leader, and leadership is seen as an effect. From this perspective, LD refers to engaging individuals in community by utilizing social system (Day, 2001). However, it is also noted that what has been theorized as LD emphasizes developing individual leaders (Goethals *et al*, 2004; Day, 2001). This can be clearly seen in the type of leadership competences.

Therefore, it may be stated that each leadership theory can be placed within a specific attention of LD. Similarly, the theory of LD tends to emphasis on one or several aspects of the process; thus, the effectiveness of LD theory is likely to differ based on the area that will be considered in the literature. This was evident by Conger (1992) who claims that LD can occur by building skills. Accordingly, this study focuses on leadership behaviours/capabilities and development methods to understand how LD is applied.

The next sections attempt to construct an understanding of LD, drawing on the literature pertaining to these topics. The literature review will serve as a vehicle for developing a conceptual framework for this study that explores how LD occurs and the factors influencing its application. This will be the guiding framework for structuring this chapter.

2.4. LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS AND COMPETENCIES

Most research shows that behavioural and capabilities requirements are intimately intertwined and competency frameworks normally express both capabilities/behavioural accomplishments (Storey, 2004).

2.4.1. Competency Definitions

Although many studies defined leadership competencies, there is no agreement on a single definition. Hunt (1996) describes competency as “the ability to translate knowledge into action that results in desired performance”. For Lucia and Lepsinger (1995), competency is “a cluster of related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that affects a major part of one’s job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured against well-accepted standards, and that can be improved via training and development”. Tett et al (2000) see it as “an identifiable aspect of prospective work behaviour attributable to the individual that is expected to contribute positively and/or negatively to organizational effectiveness”. Beinecke and Spencer (2009) describe competency as “the combination of attributes, skills and knowledge that contribute to a person’s ability to perform a job to an appropriate standard”. For Boyatzis (1982), competency is “an underlying characteristic of the person that leads to or causes effective or superior performance”.

The above definitions are similar by their focus on behaviour as the indicator of the future orientation that helps to achieve ultimately the effective performance. It should be noted that the terms skills and competencies are regarded as similar concepts; and skills and behaviours are used interchangeably (Storey, 2004; Hunt, 1996). Beinecke and Spencer (2009) and Boyatzis (1982) definitions fit the purpose of this study.

2.4.2. A Brief Review of Competency Frameworks

The competency model of human resource field has been considered since the 1970s by McClelland (1973). Much research on the competencies approach indicates that this concept refers to an underlying characteristic of an individual that allows presenting a high-level performance in a specific situation, role, or job through a set of relevant knowledge, skills and attributes that lead to successfully achieve a task or an activity within a specific function or even job (Naidu, 2009; Boyatzis, 1982; Spencer and Spencer, 1993). Boyatzis (2008) asserts that the theory of action and job performance exists when job demands, individual's competencies, and organisational environment are *best fit*. Thus, developing leadership competencies will be established (Boyatzis, 1982).

Competency refers to understanding the correctness of the leadership competency, to engage in self-surveillance, which would help to correct inaccuracy. For instance, Wong *et al,* (2003) believe what is the six meta-competency model, as the most correct leadership competencies including: identity, mental agility, cross-cultural savvy, interpersonal maturity, world-class warrior, and professional astuteness. They intended to find more accurate development needs, noting that these competencies are taught in the classroom and everyday experiences. Similarly, Yeung and Ready (1995) argue that identifying leadership competencies and understanding the best way to develop these competencies tend to be two separated issues, which make some development methods appear to be more successful in developing some leadership behaviours/capabilities than others do (Choi *et al*, 2012).

In the previous models, there is an inquiry of why a specific set of behaviours/capabilities is more effective than others. This was supported by Adair who criticises leadership models that depend on trait approach because they fail to demonstrate high quality leadership. Adair argues to prove individual's potential as a leader would require a set of behaviours including leadership and teamwork; decision-making; communication; self-management; and personal quality that make them effective in different environments (Adair, 2005).

Moser (2008) distinguishes between two types of competencies, and argues that general competencies are about knowledge and skill development. He states that adopting general competency models for specific roles tends to be common in an organisation because they help strategically prepare the workplace for future company challenges. Bennis and Thomas' (2002) model of leadership competencies includes ingredients of adaptive capacities, engaging others by creating shared meaning, integrity, and voice competencies. Their model describes competencies at a high level of abstraction, but with the lack of role, level and even the required behaviours for designing training programmes and leadership performance. In this regard, this model is likely to be applied as a general model for leaders.

Generic competencies pose problems because they are applicable in their entirety with the lack of the specificity of situation, role, and organisational culture (Thompson *et al*, 1996;

DeVries *et al*, 2004). The competencies required for an effective leader in a superior-performance organisation are complex and overlapping (Collins et al, 2000). Particularly, the currently complex organisations need diverse leadership skills that best fit their job, individual and organisational needs (Patching, 2011; Harvey *et al*, 2012; Boyatzis, 2009, 2011; Boyatzis *et al*, 2002).

Although some studies identify the competencies required for a particular context (McDonnell et al, 2011; Yeung and Ready, 1995), there is no agreement for a specific model that identify particular competencies to fit different contexts. In this regard, Hayes et al (2000) argue that, different leaders working in different contexts may require developing different sets of idiosyncratic competencies to respond to the requirements of their immediate circumstances. This may suggest that acquisition of competencies occurs in rapidly continuous process because leaders may operate in a dynamic and uncertain environment, so the competencies that provide effective leadership performance in the past might no longer contribute to current or future performance. This supports the argument that context helps to shape the kinds of leaders in each situation, and thus the types of behaviours/capabilities that an effective leader exhibits are related to the situation in which a leader works, and the goals that s/he intends to perform. There are three clusters of behaviours/capabilities that differentiate outstanding from average performers across different contexts in previous studies (Bray et al, 1974; Boyatzis, 2008; Kotter, 1982; Luthans, 1988; Spencer and Spencer, 1993; Goleman, 1998; Goleman *et al*, 2002; Storey, 2004). This study tries to focus on the area of overlap between three levels of requirements: jobs, individual and organisational requirements to understand the nature of leadership behaviour/capabilities required for these three levels of requirements.

2.4.3. The Behaviours and Capabilities Required

Although the behaviours/capabilities identified for this study do not represent all behaviours/capabilities, this study adopts a set of behaviours/capabilities that are common across all companies for developing their managers, regardless of their nationality, because these behaviours/capabilities are widely used in many countries of the world to differentiate outstanding managers and leaders (Boyatzis, 2008; Storey, 2004). Identifying, in turn, the behaviours/capabilities required may differ from a company to another because of the privacy of the environment surrounding each company and how each company reacts to it (Mabey and Lees, 2007). This poses the essence of the leadership behaviours/capabilities required at each context to understand how LD occurs.

Table 2.1: Leadership behaviour/capabilities

Big picture sense-making	The ability to deliver change	Inter-organisational representation

Understanding the whole
• Demonstrating knowledge of the entire organization
• Using systems theory
• Effective use of technology
• Demonstrating global sensitivity
• Effective compensation
• Ethical practices
Cognitive competence:
• Decision-making
• Solving problems
• The ability to learn/adapt
• Strategic thinking
  • Critical thinking
  • Creative thinking
  • Analytical ability
 	
Business skills
	Leading change
	• Creating transformational change
	• Developing a continuous learning culture
	• Building support mechanisms to create and sustain change efforts
	• Managing the change process
	• Developing change agents
	• Encouraging individual change
	• Encouraging structural change
	Emotional intelligence/Self-management competencies:
	• Self-awareness
	• Emotional self-awareness
	• Emotional self-control
	• Adaptability
	Communication/the Leader's Voice
	• Demonstrating appropriate emotional intelligence
	• Using active listening
	• Demonstrating non-defensiveness
	• Skilfully using language
	• Skilfully using body language
	• Effective interviewing
	• Effective negotiation
	• Effectively giving oral presentations
		Relational management and Social competencies:
		• Social awareness
		• Empathy
		• Teamwork
		• Building trust
		• Inspiring other
		• Delegating effectively
		• Mentor and coach
		• Serving as an appropriate role model for others
		• Conflict management

Adapted from (Tubbs and Schulz, 2006; Storey, 2004; Goleman et al., 2002; Boyatzis, 1982, 2009; Boyatzis et al, 2002)

2.4.3.1. Big picture sense-making

This cluster highlights the ability to understand internal/external environment and opportunities and move between them (Naidu, 2009; Storey, 2004; Benington and Turbitt, 2007), which helps leaders gain the respect of followers by demonstrating their knowledge of the entire organization through the leader's awareness. It is argued that behaviours/capabilities under this cluster are specialised for leaders' role rather than managers' role. This is supported by (Storey, 2004; Grint, 2005). If this is correct, there may be a huge gap between leadership and management competencies, but this is not supported by some writers (Jones, 2007; Huber, 2006; Bush and Coleman, 2000).

Understanding the whole

These meta-capabilities allow leaders gaining respect of their people in an organisation through demonstrating their knowledge of the whole organisation. It is argued that, in this category, the use of systems theory is crucial to demonstrate the influence of change on different parts across organisational system (Gibson and Birkinshaw, 2004; Martens, 2011), and to give a big picture of leader's awareness (Peter, 2010).

Tube and Schulz's (2006) highlight different behaviours for understanding the whole in a company, and emphasise an effective application of technology, acting as a critical skill in today's organisations and its role in training and development; utilizing effective compensation as a kind of motivation for today's business; demonstrating an overarching commitment to ethical practices. This set represents critical behaviours for understanding "big picture" environment meta-capabilities that must develop in a company because of their role for understanding individual, company, and jobs' requirements.

Carrol and McCrackin (1998) assert that these meta-capabilities relate to both individuals and organisations to accomplish an organisation's purpose. However, Storey (2004) goes further, and highlights the differences between leaders and managers, and argues that big-picture capabilities tend to be attributed only to leaders rather than manager because leaders focus on the strategic big-picture, while managers focus on detail and procedures. Thus, this suggests that big-picture meta-capabilities target only those who are at the strategic level. This is because managers might know more details about tasks, individuals, performance, and organisations than leaders do, as leaders focus less on details (Maccoby, 2000; Bennis and Nanus, 2003). These meta-capabilities are criticised because it provides a big picture of leader's awareness, rather than the small picture of what leaders are good at. This is through moving "up-and-out" of system thinking rather than "down-and-in" (Peter, 2010).

Similarly, it is argued that contingent or situational leadership perspectives acknowledge that leadership occurs in a variety of dynamic situations within various contextual variables that should be taken into account. This argument is supported by (Yukl, 2010:240) who stresses that "contingency theories do not provide sufficient guidance in the form of general principles to help managers recognize the underlying leadership requirements and choices in the myriad of fragmented activities and problems confronting them".

Grint (2005b) highlights the interaction between context and leadership, and argues that effective leaders can shape the contextual elements because leaders have a main role in making sense of the context. This approach proposes that leaders are the basis in sense-making of the context, and thus how to define a situation and how to frame it for others tend to be the cornerstone for leadership (Hartley, 2002). For instance, complicated changes in an uncertain environment is partly expected or organised for by the leadership (Hartley, 2000), which raises the need for big picture sense-making, particularly in unstable business environments, organisational and management change in terms of uncertainty and ambiguity circumstances (Weick, 1995). This proposes that persons make big picture of complicated events through constructing reasonable explanations of what happening rather than accurate explanations. Therefore, a leader role in a big picture sense-making model has less awareness of the future, but it offers a reasonable narrative that helps a leader understand the expectation, and arrange what best fit job, individual, and organisational requirements to address the problem.

For understanding big picture meta-capabilities, it might make adopting Storey's view (2004) regarding the differences between leaders and managers as crucial procedure because identifying the differences in terms of roles, behaviours and even traits may help identify the effective competencies required to develop leadership role.

For example, Grint (2005) suggests the forms of problems, and argues that each of these forms simultaneously permits and limits the various types of decision-making that should be noted in each situation at a particular time. He continues to say that a problem is seen as *tame* problem which require *managers* of the situation through utilizing a set of stabilizing strategies developed via similar situations in previous events; while a *wicked* problem is constructed as a complex issue, and is often intractable. Grint suggests that when constructing problem in this way the premise is that *leaders* will be required where the leaders' role is centred on asking right question and avoiding the right answer because the answer may require a collaborative process to provide any progress (Grint, 2005). Accordingly, leadership of each type of problem requires different strategies and roles; and brings together the appropriate competency and resources to tackle a known or solvable problem. This suggests that leadership competencies can differ amongst leaders based on their roles.

Cognitive competencies

They are defined by a wide set of definitions (Jones et al, 2006; Mercado, 2008), as well as narrow definitions (Sun and Hui, 2006). Building on Mumford et al's (2007:156) description, cognitive competencies can be defined as "the foundation of the leadership skill requirement. They are comprised of those skills related to basic cognitive capacities".

Sun and Hui (2012) discuss the essential role of critical thinking and creative thinking as a core cognitive competence, they note that creative/critical thinking, as strategic thinking skills help to facilitate effective problem-solving and decision-making, and learning for positive development. Some empirical studies also reveal that both creative/critical thinking are complementary to facilitate learning and knowledge construction (Edwards, 1991; Ritchie and Edwards, 1996; Dewey and Bento, 2009; Banu-Yucel and Ok, 2012).

Pisapia *et al* (2005) assume that successful leaders working in complex, ambiguous or chaotic environment think more strategically than less successful leaders in the same environment. They suggest three cognitive processes associated with strategic thinking: reflection, system thinking and reframing, which help distinguish between successful and less successful leaders in complex environments.

Pisapia (2010) asserts that strategic thinking places a premium on synthesis and integration and requires the ability to investigate new possibilities dealing with large chunks of information. This suggests that strategic thinking helps leaders understand the big picture of their company. This supports the argument saying the use of strategic thinking is connected with leader effectiveness (Sun-Keung and Pisapia, 2012).

For Kao (2006), the biggest challenge for today organisations is that of unknown unknowns. To manage this, new models of leadership and organisations are needed. For big picture understanding, Yeo (2009) claims that the individual should be trained to adapt to change on an independent level because this skill can create an organic quality within complex systems that will benefit the larger whole. Yeo calls this philosophy organizational learning. This leads to a need for the ability to adapt to change as cognitive competence. This is facilitated by the possession of active learning skills (Jacobs and Jaques, 1987), which enable leaders to work with new information, ideas, and grasp its implications. Kanungo and Misra (1992) claim that the ability to adapt to change allow leaders to adapt strategies to deal with emergent, non-routine, and dynamic components of their jobs.

Research study indicates that the essence of strategic leadership lies in the ability to learn, the ability to change, and managerial wisdom (Boal and Hooijberg, 2000). It is argued that these abilities are often highlighted in organizational transformations when the managers trying to make meaning and vision for the organizations might need to significantly change the business model on which the whole organizational effort is based, to take advantage of emerging strategic opportunities and threats, and to balance the needs of different stakeholders (Storey, 2005:2004). Mascarenhas (1985) argues that a strategic requirement for a company operating in a highly dynamic environment is based on: the ability to adapt to the changing environment and the flexibility to ensure its effectiveness and survival. Conversely, Lozada and Calantone (1996) note that leaders working in a low-dynamic environment have the predictability of environment change, as well as a greater ability to react to and change the environment.

Business skills

These skills correlate with the type of business sector. Zaccaro (2001) says that these skills are mainly related to specific functional areas; and these skills serve to create the context in which managers and leaders work (Connelly et al, 2000). Business skills have been listed into big picture sensemaking cluster because business and strategic skills are important for strategic leadership, as Hambrick and Mason (1984) say that these function-specific skills are typically relevant to the systems in which system skills in a company are adopted. Hiebert and Klatt (2001) argue that because leaders must focus attention on results, business skills are one of a set of specific skills required, which help effective leaders how to act. This may suggest that business skills are not only required at operational level. This is supported by evidence that effective leadership has been associated with greater functional expertise (Hambrick and Mason, 1984).

2.4.3.2. Inter-organisational representation

The meta-capabilities under this cluster are vital capabilities for a top-level leader to lead in a social context including coalition building and understanding diverse perspectives (Storey, 2004; Hartley and Benington, 2010).

Relational management and Social competencies

Some studies suggest that leadership does not occur only at the top level, but it can be distributed across the whole organisation, or across inter-organisational relationship (Spillane *et al*, 2004; Ferlie and Shortell, 2001; DeChurch *et al*, 2010), so such kind of leadership relies on the personal power and the professional of leaders and their skills and abilities in coalition building and inter-organisational network rather than their leadership positions across organisational structure. This suggests that traditional management style may not be effective into management system of today's organisations. For example, it is argued that knowledge must be shared with team members, regardless of the leadership positions to achieve quality outcomes, such as healthcare organisations, so this is relevant to working in partnership outside/inside the organisation and inter-organisational networks (Bate *et al*, 2009; Hartley and Allison, 2000).

McEvily et al (2000) state that organisations' need to allocate attention to collaboration as a critical element in the process of competency development; they note that the process of competency development is related to the commitment to shareholders**.** Some researchers indicate that social competencies including social awareness, such as empathy; and relational management competencies, such as teamwork, building trust, and inspiring other (Goleman et al., 2002; Boyatzis, 1982:2008; Boyatzis et al, 2002), tend to be vital competencies because they reinforce the importance and role of leadership transformational bias in organisations, which best fits today's business world (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2002b; Hicks and Given, 2013).

Cohen and Bradford (1990) suggest the term of "influence without authority" to indicate leadership behaviour utilized to influence followers to achieve the goals rather than using the power, such as the influence in teamwork. Empirical research study proposed that the ingredients of transformational leadership positively influences advice network density in teamwork and that advice network density serve as a mediating mechanism linking transformational leadership to team performance. The result highlights the essential role played by transformational leadership in enhancing team social networks and ultimately, team effectiveness (Zhanq and Peterson, 2011).

Some studies argue that transformational leadership may increase a team's orientation towards innovation by providing a vision. This occurs through supporting a risk-tolerant climate, providing opportunities for learning and professional development, and challenging team members to create new solutions of precious problems through thinking "out of the box" (Shalley and Gilson, 2004; Sosik, *et al*, 1997). Halbesleben and his colleagues claim that setting goals represent a critical competency of leaders of innovation organisations, which allow transformation leadership behaviour managing time frames of complex innovation tasks (Halbesleben, *et al*, 2003). Amabile *et al*, (1996) argue that this ability contributes to encourage company's people to trust their leaders, and reduce the gaps between them through providing a psychologically safe workplace environment.

However, others may not support that leadership behaviours/capabilities can be generalised across all contexts; thus transformational leadership competencies may not work effectively across all environments. In this regard, Jung *et al.* (1995) speculate that transformational leadership competencies are more effective in collectivist cultures than in individualist culture, being enhanced through the respect for the authority and obedience characteristics of collectivist culture, which encourage adopting this type of competencies.

This suggests that inter-organisational representation may not work effectively when moving from collectivist to individualist culture because the behaviours/capabilities required must fit their individual, job demands and organisational environment (Boyatzis, 1982:2008).

2.4.3.3. The ability to deliver change

These meta-capabilities hinge on a set of skills including leading change, such as mobilizing support, investing in individuals' training and development and empowering them for decision-making; and communication skills; and also the key component with these mete-capabilities are emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, emotional self-awareness, adaptability (Storey, 2004; Boyatzis, 1982, 2009, 2011; Boyatzis *et al,* 2002).

Eyde *et al,* (1999) identified five competencies, namely, continual learning, creativity and innovation, external awareness, flexibility, resilience, service motivation, strategic thinking, and vision, which are grouped into leading change competencies. Tubbs and Schulz, (2006) suggest seven competencies belong to leading change competencies, namely, creating transformational change, developing an organizational culture that embraces continuous learning, building support mechanisms to create and sustain change efforts, managing the change process, developing change agents, and encouraging individual as well as structural change in the organization.

For both models, it is noted that leading change competency may occur across all leadership positions, but with varying degree. Drawing on this and related studies, it is argued that the leadership type contributes to define the ability to deliver change, its nature, and its levels.

For example, Burns (1978) claims the transformational leader reflecting the traits and behaviours that are necessary for initiating change. These types of leadership identify themselves as change agents and serve to take responsibility for change. Similarly, Senge (1996) describe these leaders as people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and their organisations.

According to Storey, (2004), the ability to deliver change is connected to which extend a leader is able to inspire followers, to be active listeners, to invest in training and development, and to empower others, which are the main characteristics of transformational leadership. Research study explored that the enactment of transformational leadership serve to enhance the quality of LD instruction. The findings indicates that when LD instructors utilize an instructor transformational leadership style to deliver the transformational leadership notion to managers, these instructors are truly reinforcing change and practicing what they are preaching (Pounder, 2003). This can explain the role of some leadership types for deliver the change to others.

Communication

Two levels to these meta-capabilities have been identified: 1) leadership *In* organisation that refers to face-to-face communication activities with the lowest level on which interpersonal skills are at a premium; 2) leadership *Of* organisation that refers to non face-to-face communication activities because the focus is on the top level of the organisation; and it concerns for the evaluation of the organisation (Hooijberg et al, 2007; De Vries *et al*, 2004). This implies that diverse leadership capabilities are required to accomplish into these two roles because leadership *In* organisation and leadership *Of* organisation refer to contentious concepts of the hierarchical leader in terms of the required behaviours/capabilities. Boal and Hooijberg, (2000) state that transformational/charismatic theories and visionary leadership are rooted from the term of leadership *Of* organisation because responsible leadership at the top level needs leaders to exercise behaviour and cognitive complexity, social intelligence (Bowerman and Van Wart, 2011). Drawing on this, research evidence conducted by Flauto (1999) suggested communication competency was required for effective transformational leadership. This suggests that communication competency is required in different leadership types (Holladay and Coombs, 1993; Fairhurst, 1993; Mintzberg, 1994). Thus, the role of communication competency for developing leadership can be noted through job outcomes of company's people. For instance, some researchers state that interpersonal interactions involving the exchange of information and influencing among co-workers and between employees and their leaders have significant influences on the employees' psychological job outcomes (Pincus, 1986; Postmes et al, 2001; Ray and Miller, 1994).

Emotional intelligence

An emotional competence is described as a learned capability based on emotional intelligence which results in outstanding performance at work (Goleman, 1998). From Boyatzis's (1982, 2008, 2011) views, an emotional intelligence is an ability to recognize, understand, and use emotional information about oneself that leads to or causes effective or superior performance. Yukl (2010) suggests that leadership is a process of social interaction where leaders attempt to influence their followers' behaviours. Ashkanasy and Tse (2000) build on Yukl perception, and argue that the reason for selecting and developing the emotional intelligence of leaders is to enhance their effectiveness in influencing their followers and to contribute to an uplifting climate. Several studies support the previous arguments, and claim the link of emotional intelligence ingredients such as self-awareness, emotion recognition ability, empathy, and positive influence with positive leader perceptions and job satisfaction among followers (Sosik and Megerian, 1999; Newcombe and Ashkanasy, 2002; Wong and Law, 2002; Wolff *et al*, 2002; Rubin *et al*, 2005).

Similarly, Goleman (2001) asserts that leaders classified as an emotionally intelligent are essential to developing culture where employees are encouraged to perform to the best of their ability. This might support the idea that LD and its development methods/activities can be influenced by the emotional intelligence norms that reflect the coach, expert, or leader's personality of each team, department, or leadership level. For example, Dickson *et al*., (2001: 201) support the previous argument, and state that when a leader helps the team develop its norms; the culture that is developed maintains a harmony with the team leader's individual personality**.** Thus, if the norms developed reflect the team leader's individual personality, it may be argued the emotional intelligence norms developed on the team would reflect the emotional intelligence competencies of the team leader (Koman and Wolff, 2008).

Leading change, communication and emotional intelligence, regardless of the leadership levels are required for today business, which may be seen in different leadership types that share commonalties with transformational leadership, and is described by (Schein, 1992) as a supporting a learning culture, encouraging change, and identifying dysfunctionality, whereas its practices show a shift from a type of leadership based on power to one focussed on the capability to work with others and facilitate others to act. This is seen by Eyde et al., (1999) who argue that supporting change mete-capabilities “were important to all levels of leadership, but at varying degrees,” (p.3).

Although there is a set of leadership behaviours/capabilities under the three clusters that have been discussed earlier, it is patently evident that there are no clear answers that determine to which extent these behaviours/capabilities are widely adopted across different organisations. This argument may be supported by the idea that many attempts to provide answers of the leadership behaviour/capabilities required for best leader and organisation reveal contradictory outcomes because the interpretations of LD are shaped and influenced by the ideational, ideological, and institutional context (Storey, 2004; Mabey and Finch-Lee, 2007; Ramirez, 2004; Estevez-Abe *et al*, 2001; Martineau and Patterson, 2010; Sheehan, 2012; Peretz and Rosenblatt, 2011; Day, 2001). This may raise the need for considering leadership behaviour/capabilities required based on context specific to understand the nature of LD required in a specific context and the reasoning behind them.

As a result, adopting the leadership behaviour/capabilities required reveal contradictory results of most research findings, which will be addressed in the next section.

The Outcome of Leadership Behaviours/Capabilities

Although the clusters above describe capabilities at a high level of differences and similarities in terms of the role, leadership level, and the required behaviours for training and development, they are perceived as the common behaviours/capabilities for understanding the outstanding leaders in many countries of world (Kotter, 1982; Luthans, 1988; Spencer and Spencer, 1993; Goleman, 1998; Goleman *et al*, 2002; Storey, 2004; Boyatzis, 1982:2008) that can serve multiple functions based on the context.

Bolden and Gosling, (2006) indicate how the competency approach to leadership could be conceived of as a repeating refrain that continues to offer an illusory promise to rationalize and simplify the processes of selecting, measuring and developing leaders, citing the more common weaknesses of the notion of a repeating refrain. These weaknesses indicate that competency approach fragments the role of management rather than representing it as an integrated whole. The generic competencies that suppose a common set of capabilities serve to solve general problems. There is a focus on past and current performance as an effective means for meeting future requirements, such as crises and problems. The way in which competencies tend to emphasise measurable behaviours and outcomes rather than focusing on more stable qualities, integrations, and situational factors. The focus on objective measures cannot capture the subjective experience of the leadership. This is likely to result the limited and mechanistic approach to education (Bolden and Gosling, 2006).

From one hand, they assert from the semantic analysis of the competency frameworks that it would appear a limited version of ‘transformational leadership is being promoted in most competency frameworks. They tend to consider a set of qualities of leaders including cognitive and interpersonal, and affective ones; thus leadership is emerged as a set of traits, qualities and behaviours possessed by the leader that support participants, development, and commitment of others within the organization. In this regard, leaders can use their different abilities across several situations and contexts (Bolden and Gosling, 2006).

From the other hand, the focus of the reflective report is centred on the moral and relational dimension of leadership where a leader makes sense of complexity and uncertainty based on strong beliefs and emotional engagement with others. Their findings indicate that although the competency discourse is likely to become a somewhat bland noise far too limited in its vocabulary to illustrate the difficulties of leadership in action, it is still unable to create new life into the practice and performance of leadership (Bolden and Gosling, 2006).

It is argued that the development of competency models is based on two ways: a) utilizing critical crises system or categorising of leaders by their followers, b) utilizing behavioural questionnaires (Yukl, 2010). Competency approach, thus, is unable to link between organisational and leadership effectiveness due to the different objectives of companies. In this regard, leaders require abilities to identify and solve the complex problems of their organisation through their conflicting roles. This step presents leaders’ role in balancing competing roles; and conflicting demands suggest that a superior performance may need the simultaneous ingenuity of contradictory-paradoxical competencies (Daft and Lane, 2008; Yu and Wu, 2009). This proposes that companies adopt and develop their leadership competencies in order to tackle their contextual challenges (Patching, 2011).

Thus, this may suggest that best fit competencies are used for tackle specific challenges in dynamic environments (Boyatzis, 1982, 2009, 2011; Boyatzis *et al*, 2002). But if generic competencies are adopted across different companies, this can reinforce the idea that these companies are: 1) working in stable environment and similar business circumstances (Bolden and Gosling 2006); 2) using the critically rational technique, adopting questionnaires focusing on behavioural, functional, and past and present performance descriptors for developing generic competency frameworks (Yukl, 2010; Hayes *et al*, 2000); 3) reinforcing the strength of some leadership competencies for many companies (Hogan and Warrenfeltz, 2003; Viitala, 2005).

McCauley et al (2010) stress that competency approach serves multiple functions in a LD system. They note that using the same competency framework in different LD processes reinforces the framework and creates greater linkages among different LD processes. Drawing on this and related research, some researchers claim that identical behaviours across different companies differentiate between successful and less successful leaders/managers (Boyatzis 1982; Spencer and Spencer, 1993; Russell, 2001; Levenson *et al*, 2006).

Accordingly, leadership competencies approach is termed as a critical area to search due to its positive/negative outcomes toward LD across the contradictory-paradoxical debates and research results. Some empirical studies support the idea that adopting and developing leadership behaviours/capabilities are based on the term of best fit to respond to the requirements of their immediate circumstances (Patching, 2011; Harvey et al, 2012; Boyatzis, 1982, 2008, 2011; Boyatzis et al, 2002; Hayes et al, 2000); while others support the notion of generic leadership competencies (McDonnell et al, 2011; Yeung and Ready, 1995).

Additionally, the fast change of environment proposes that a superior performance may require the simultaneous ingenuity of contradictory-paradoxical competencies. In other words, the discussions about the leadership competencies approach and its application appear to be continuous, especially, what can be seen as generic and specific leadership behaviours/capabilities might differ based on the institutional-cultural context.

The conclusion given to the reader is that were there generic leadership behaviour/capabilities models, the reasons behind selecting them would differ based on the characteristics of environment in which a company works. In this regard, it can be stated that each company adopts and develops its leadership behaviours/capabilities that best fit its internal/external environments. Even if companies are sharing their generic competencies with others, this may not mean that they have the same a superior performance. Accordingly, this makes understanding leadership competencies and its application essential at each company because this may help to understand how LD occurs and help the designers of LD programme to understand the ideal behaviours/capabilities utilised within LD in different contexts.

2.5. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT METHODS

The dominant way of describing a LD system is by indicating what companies do to develop their leaders and what types of methods they utilise. Mole (2004) highlights the value of the training and development used in LD, and notes that the criticism is not that development methods are not worthwhile, but the sorts of training and development that pays insufficient about context. Schatz (1997) states that traditional academics fail to respond to companies' requirements for developing leadership practices, arguing that although training and development supported by theories and scholars, this is not adopted by business schools.

The next sections discuss the three common methods for training and development interventions offered by in-house and by external providers.

Table 2.2 Leadership development interventions

The type of interventions	Development methods/activities
Experiential Learning	Action Learning Executive Coaching Networking Job Rotation
Self and Team Analysis/Exploration	360 degree feedback
High-Level Strategy Training/Courses	MBA degree Specific courses

2.5.1. Experiential Learning

This mode of provision is very dominant in LD literature. The typologies of learning of such method operate on the basis of action learning. The review of powerful pedagogical tools for leadership begins with very common development method, which is learning through experience and practice. McCall (2004) indicates that experience is the major source of learning via training and some formal programmes. However, LD occurs also via some informal programmes, such as on-the-job mentoring and on-the job experiences (Hartley, 2010).

More specifically, the concepts of leadership education and LD are overlapped in literature despite of their historic differences. Fox (1997) believes that the consequence of the independent consultancy business has led to new disciplinary area of knowledge and practices, which is leadership learning, through merging knowledge and practices that leaders learn in action, training-rooms, and business school classrooms; however Fox notes that leadership education and LD are more expert in ‘talking about’ than ‘talking within’ leadership practice (p.32).

Situated learning theory offers LD a rationale for extending its application. Although LD is taking place outside the workplace in business classrooms (Denhardt and Campbell, 2005), classroom fails to transfer LD into practice because this may contradict with factors as the organisations’ culture (Kramer, 2008). As developers, trainers, and designers see people in different ways, designing educational, and developmental process imposes to turn people to individuals through moving from on-job training to some kinds of classroom. This allows individualizing people through separating them in terms of their roles, behaviours, activities to facilitate self-discovery (Fox, 1997).

Stenberg et al, (2008) suggest that during the cycle of separation and return participates, the value of training reflects two areas: 1) the personal development of participants being separated from their work environment in which leaders can consider their life-work-leadership issues; 2) developing personal and work network and trying to continue these relationships and benefits even after returning to the company. In this regard, sharing learning and knowledge, in most today’s companies become an essential need; where leaders re-think the nature of training and development and recognise the nature of social learning that differ from traditional ones through investing in experimentally based collaborative learning (Brown and Isaacs, 2005).

More generally, the separation of people may create obstacles for communication in community in the context of informal contacts (Andersson and Thornqvist, 2007), particularly, if participants are from different countries, cultures, or sectors, which may have different interests. These differences are likely to be a major obstacle in the process to define common interests and develop a transactional collective identity (Whittall, 2007; Bicknell, 2007). This separation serves to create a state of confusion for participants; particularly those who may have different purposes related to their companies, departments, or leadership levels. Consequently, Murray *et al* (2006) emphasise the need for identifying competencies that are needed to operate effectively in their local context and understanding how such competencies can be developed when applying or transferring LD methods to specific context (chapter 4.5.6.7). The relationship between this model of LD and specific leadership theory was noted by different studies: a constructivist leadership of the operation of power (Grint, 2005; Lambert et al, 1995), charismatic and transformational leadership (Trigwell and Prosser, 1991; Gow and Kember, 1990), and also it closely linked to trait and contingency view of leadership because it assumes that leadership will be stable and predictable over time.

Social learning

The roots of social learning literature come from the work of Bandura's social learning theory that focuses on how individuals learn behaviours by observing others do tasks. Social learning theory sees human behaviour as a reciprocal interaction among three factors: cognitive, behaviour, and environment (Bandura, 1978; Lajoie and Azevedo, 2006). Learning, therefore, poses the relationship between learners and their environment.

Bandura (1978) suggests that environment influences behaviour; and individuals produce partly the environmental condition that influences their behaviour; especially, individuals contribute to create the social milieu, which arises in their transactions every day. Similarly, by reciprocal interactions between leaders, their behaviour, and the environment, leaders will be as products and producers of the environment (Hannah *et al*, 2005).

Sadler-Smith (2006) argues that social learning is an important theory for LD, acting as a means that influence LD practice in different areas, such as self-development. Similarly, Kempster (2009) claims that the variability of leadership practice and meaning is connected with practices transmitted by observational learning from notable others; he notes that the influence of observational learning can highlight the problems of changing leadership practice.

The next sections highlight the development methods/activities that are categorized under experiential learning.

2.5.1.1. Action Learning

It is seen as a pragmatic notion that stems from humanistic view of individual via experiential learning to address the difficult and complex problem of organisation. Marquardt, (2011:2) defined it as:

A powerful problem-solving tool that has the amazing capacity to simultaneously build successful leaders, teams, and organisations; it is a process that involves a small group working on real problems, taking action, and learning as individuals, as a team, and an organisation while doing so.

Action learning emerges the alignment between learning and action because there is no learning without action and there is no action without learning in turn. Revans (2011) proposes that action leaning is not for puzzles, but for situations, and deals with the resolution of problem, where "no single course of action is to be justified, so different managers, all reasonable, experienced and sober, might set out by treating them in markedly different ways" (p.4). Pedler, (2011) states that action learning is the process intended for these problems through learning from making deliberate experiments, and proceeding by questions, rather than rushing solutions.

Moreover, most researchers considering best practice in LD conclude that action learning is very common method to improve LD, acting as a process of approaching problem with a learning view, where participants solve problems and develop in the process, and thus there is no room for leaders in this formation. Revans (2011:36) suggests that participants should be recruiting into three classes of membership: 1) who understands the problem; 2) who genuinely wants something done about problem; and 3) who can get anything useful done about problem. McGill and Beaty, (2001) state that participants in the group take forward a significant issue with the support of the other members of the group. This process helps participants to take an active stance toward life, and overcome the pressure created by work and life. Reynolds (1998) claims that reflection in action learning provides a deeper awareness of the social power in the collaborative question rather than focussing on individual. Such a deeper awareness increases individual's capacity to learn despite the fact that they may not be engaged in a particular type of learning (Gibson and Earley, 2007). It is argued that participants are the core of educational concepts represented by all learning activities included action learning. This provides with an opportunity to learners for adaptation in the unpredictable environment, which requires high level of competence as Raven (2001:21) describes it: "It has become clear that there is very little formal understanding of the nature of high-level competence, how its components are to be natured, or how these components are to be assessed".

Hii & Marquardt (2000) argues that although most of the research on action learning and LD is anecdotal and focuses on advocacy rather than evidence, a wide number of researchers linked between action learning and developing leadership competencies. For example, Marquardt et al. (2009) linked between action learning and four leadership competency types: 1) Cognitive skills and competencies that include seasoned analytical skills, strategic thinking, creativity, and global perspective; 2) Execution skills and competencies that include customer focus, planning, program management, and focus on results; 3) Relationship skills and competencies that include influencing, engaging and inspiring, managing talent, creating open communication, collaborating, and building relationships. 4) Self-management skills and competencies that include the ability to establish trust, adaptability, impulse control, and curiosity and love of learning. Dilworth (1998) states that action learning supports leadership skills that encourage fresh thinking, and thus enable leaders to avoid responding to today's problems with yesterday's solutions while tomorrow's challenges. McGill and Beatty (1995) linked the role of action learning to provide managers the opportunity to take appropriate levels of responsibility in self-development. Consequently, action learning can be used for developing different leadership competencies, but this may require understanding the relation between action learning and specific competency in specific context.

2.5.1.2. Executive Coaching Method

Executive coaching is used in supporting the change by improving individual performance with specific leadership competencies and specific problem solving, and is “a practical, goal-focused form of personal, one-on-one learning” (Hall et al, 1999:40). In other words, Executive coaching is seen as “an experiential and individualized leader development process that builds a leader’s capability to achieve short-and long-term organizational goals. It is conducted through one-on-one and/or group interactions, driven by data from multiple perspectives, and based on mutual trust and respect; the organisation, an executive, and the executive coach work in partnership to achieve maximum impact” (the Executive Coaching Forum, 2008:19).

In this vein, Bluckert (2005) proposes that the outcomes from coaching stem from two types of executive coaching: 1) the first type focuses on learning and development to improve performance; 2) the second type focuses on change. For Laske (2007), these types of executive coaching impose that coaches may require different skills and experience. Some researchers argue that effective coaches should be aware of the diversity of challenges. For Spence and colleagues (2006), effective coaches must be ready to face unexpected potentials created by a coaching environment. For Frankovelgia and Riddle (2010), effective coaches encourage reflection before action, and seek to understand rather than critique. In this process, Gray (2007) refers to the role of coaches to facilitate experience in terms of guiding participants by a transient culture including company's culture, and helping participants to become more committed and confident. He claims that due to the different nature of change within workplace, this implies that coaches can take a set of roles. Executive coaching, thus, has an essential role in today's business regarding LD, particularly when investing in new environment, as Hall *et al*, (1999) put it, executive coaching serves to help participants understand the social, political, and cultural contexts to develop behavioural skills that fit the dominant culture.

2.5.1.3. Networking activity

Networking refers to a supportive system or a process in which information and services can be shared among people and groups and its benefits can be reviewed by relationships, opportunities, and resources (Lawson, 2009:72). Leadership network classifications are rooted in the field of LD and have also been influenced by works, as Provan and Milward (2001), Borgatti and Foster (2003), and Harmaakorpi *et al*, (2003), all of whom have developed their own ways of classifying different types of networks used within the concepts of LD. Ibarra (1995) states that networking is important because of its role to accomplish tasks and develop personally and professionally. Ibarra has discussed three types of networks that are relevant to leadership and management positions and each type is especially important to individuals into LD process. According to Ibarra, task network serves to accomplish tasks and facilitate exchange of resources, such as information, expertise, materials, and work-related political access; (b) Career networks are related to self-development because they can facilitate the leader information about career progress by offering career advice, mentoring, helping leaders the determining the key developmental assignments, facilitating career enhancing visibility; (c) friendship/social support networks are based on closeness and trust, facilitating work accomplishments to leaders. McCauley and Douglas (2004:87) discuss the process of social network relationships, acting as a means to be developmental through three functions: (a) assessment through providing feedback, sounding board, comparison point, feedback interpreter; (b) giving challenge through dialogue partners, assignment broker, accountant, role model; (c) providing support through counsellor, cheerleader, reinforce, companion.

Bartol and Zhang (2007) built on the works of McCauley and Douglas (2004) and Ibarra (1995) to highlight the role of developmental networks, as a set of potential developmental resources for leaders into learning process. Bartol and Zhang also argue that although much of the traditional focus of LD is on building intrapersonal capabilities, functioning as a leader necessitates the development of interpersonal capabilities associated with dyadic ties, and relational capabilities associated with patterns of ties within networks.

Kesler (2002) argues that leaders develop their potential when they are allowed to implement their ideas or learning without encumbrances from the organization itself; thus, this may suggest that LD is enhanced when social networks within the organization facilitate individual and collective learning and development. Day and O'Connor, (2003) claim that LD can be conceptualised as involving three types of capital: human, social and system capital. In this vein, Day (2001) states that networking method provides a wider range of contacts, both inside and outside the organization, which enables the leader to have a greater range of information, perspectives and views. He argues that leadership has been traditionally viewed as an individual-level skill; and its focus is on training high-potential individuals to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities. A complementary theoretical perspective views LD differently because the focus is on social capital (Day, 2001). The essence of social capital is relationships, which rely on trust and respect to translate these elements into the culture and structure of the organization. Thus, LD becomes embedded in organizations, and focuses on the interaction between the individual, the social and organizational environment (Day, 2001). System capital highlights the ability to leverage a network of ties because this capital is expressed in organisational routines in which members engage while addressing the responsibilities of leadership. More specifically, Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) argue that networking is used as a critical activity to enhance both social and system capital in an organization because much of the capital is embedded within networks of mutual acquaintance. Networks of relationships are critical to conducting business affairs, providing actors with collectively owned capital.

Day (2001) claims that this development activity is best to develop socialisations, problem-solving, and learning who to consult for project help. For Thornton (2004), networking is a systematic approach to making contacts and building professional relationships, pointing out best practices, identifying new trends, recommending articles, books, and seminars. For Black and Earnest (2009), networking is best to improve understanding of the "big picture" competencies and management skills.

There is a common tendency toward what can be applied in one country may not be effective in another one because institutional-cultural aspects make the application of and the target of LD methods different. According to the above discussion, the author believes that networking and its purposes may not work in individual cultures or in organisations adopting individual leadership behaviours, such as autocratic leadership culture. This suggests the following question: how does network method implement for LD in individualised and collectivised cultures? And what kind of leadership competencies can deliver by this method in both cultures? Because this serves to guide the key actors within organisations for selecting their development methods that best fit their requirements.

2.5.1.4. Job Rotation activity

It is one type of experiential learning, whereby managers are assigned to work in a different set of functional subunits of the organization for limited periods of time for developmental purposes. The outcomes of job rotation include: improving knowledge and skills, a stronger belief in the value of viewing problems from different perspectives, higher mutual respect for other functions, and the need for collaboration (Campion *et al*, 1994). For LD purposes, job rotation is used as a means to enhance leadership skills by gaining experience when seeing things from different units' perspective, knowledge about the interdependent linkages between units to collect big picture about things from multiple perspectives (Cacioppe, 1998).

It is argued that certain types of jobs are more valuable for development than other types of work experiences. In this regard, MacCaukey and Van Velsor (2004) state that job experiences must be challenging for individuals to derive the greatest growth benefit. Ideally, during and following the job rotation, organisations provide, or individuals seek out, assessment and support to learn the right lessons from what has been done. Previous research indicate that job rotation supports both employee learning and the employer learning by which they acquire specific skills and knowledge related to functional areas of the organisation (Bennett, 2003; Eriksson and Ortega, 2006).

Hirst et al (2004) argue that organisations should focus on experiential learning to reinforce behavioural and practice changes through formal mentoring and job rotation programs, assignments, and opportunities for senior responsibilities to build the experience base, as a powerful stimulant of experiential learning. Consequently, Hirst and his colleagues suggest that although leadership learning takes time to be operationalized, LD programmes, which include job rotation, should be continuous and ongoing, rather than single events with no follow-up. Similarly, McCall, (1992) states that when using job rotation for LD, it must be implemented strategically to provide emotional, analytical and conceptual skills that the aspiring leader needs, rather than a random assortment of positions. For Kaymaz (2010), job rotation activity helps develop communication through social interactions that reflect human perspective as the most important catalyser in job rotation activity. From this perspective, organisations attempt to emphasize social gains as a function of job rotation activity. Socialization, therefore, develops both formal and informal dialogs and motivates people during the daily works. Empirical research reveals that senior management views job rotation as a better investment, but the greatest growth benefit is if it is used with early-career employees to improve management skills because they involve experiencing different parts of a business (Campion *et al*, 1994).

Accordingly, it may be stated that leadership job rotation serves to develop a set of leadership capabilities based on the leadership needs in each company. However, others argue that development methods may not work with the same effectiveness across all contexts. For example, Brinton (2001) addresses the application of job rotation for Japanese and Taiwanese managers, and reveals that job rotation is a common activity in large Japanese companies to provide on-the-job training, but it creates conflict between family and work for Japanese, especially, for women because it often requires geographical mobility, but geographical mobility was rarely an issue in Taiwan because the average company size is small. This raises the need to figure out the implications for leadership job rotation activity on societies that have sensitivity toward families' commitment and responsibilities, and genders because the successful application of external job rotation and even internal job rotation in large companies for a long period of time seems to be questionable for female leaders in strict societies such as Arabic or Islamic societies. This suggests that the effective outcome of the application of job rotation for LD tends to be disparate based on the country and company's characteristics. The next section will discuss the second type of LD interventions that targets leaders.

2.5.2. Self and Team Analysis and Exploration

Personality-based instruments are the most common self-analyses in this development intervention that help individuals understand their preferences and how such preferences play out in behaviour (King and Santana, 2010). For LD, examining how a leader's self-concept is formed, changed, and how to influence of behaviours (Swann *et al*, 2007), serves to develop self-awareness through comparing person's own preferences with other individuals.

2.5.2.1. 360-degree feedback method

The feedback process stems from collecting views about an individual's behaviour and the influence of such behaviour from the individual leader, direct information, colleagues, team members, and external stakeholders. Feedback is an important element of most learning process acting as a significant instructional design in training and development programmes (Goldstein and Ford, 2002), and an important element during instructional delivery by increasing learning and improving its transfer (Schoentfeldt, 1996).

For Day (2001), the use of feedback can be valuable as a development tool in LD context due to its simplicity (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998; Awater et al, 2007; Hazucha et al, 1993).

According to Day (2001), an important assumption of 360-degree feedback is that performance differs in different contexts and leader behaviour also differs with different constituencies. Feedback process via multiple sources serves to identify some differences across these multiple sources in observing different aspects of individual's performance. Facteau *et al,* (1998) suggest that leaders may have varying reactions to ratings from peers and subordinates, and note that reactions to 360-degree feedback contribute to differentiate leaders' reactions by source of feedback. This helps to explore different leadership styles based on how leaders react to others. Kelloway *et al*, (2000) propose that counselling and feedback of subordinate rating enhance transformational leadership behaviour; noting that enhancing transformational behaviour occurs by adopting alone either feedback and counselling or training. Kirkbride (2006) also states that transformational leadership can be taught through a development process, which adopts 360-degree feedback.

However, empirical research by Stoker *et al*, (2012) examines whether CEO transformational leadership makes a difference from team performance and change effectiveness. The findings reveal that there is no relationship between CEO transformational leadership and performance and change effectiveness for teams exhibiting high levels of feedback seeking behaviour, and suggest that for high-feedback seeking top management team, organizational results can be achieved without a transformational CEO.

Atwater and his colleagues (2007) highlight important issues that maximize utility of multisource or 360-degree feedback, and argue that such diverse issues must be considered by leaders before and after beginning feedback process (see table 2.3)

Table 2.3: Issues considered before/after starting feedback

Before	After
Organisational Context	Method of Distribution
Individual differences	Organisational support
Actual Process	Individual Attitudes and Behaviours
Perception of Process	Change in Ratings of Leaders
	Comparison to Other Ratings
	Employee Attitudes

Adapted from (Atwater et al, 2007)

For effective LD, especially when using 360-degree feedback, individuals should accept feedback and show flexibility. In this regard, research findings reveal that managers who initially performed poorly showed more performance improvement than those whose initial performance was good; and also reveal that a significant improvement of performance is when the purpose of upward feedback method changed from developmental to administrative purposes on performance (Jhun *et al*, 2012). Other research findings by (Facteau *et al*, 1998) claim that organisation's support contributes to increase the usefulness of subordinate feedback. A similar conclusion reached by London and Smither (2002) suggests that feedback orientation and culture influence receptivity to feedback and the extent to which feedback is valued, used, and sought.

This suggests that the outcome from adopting feedback method for LD tends to be different based on the influence of organisational culture and national culture on receptivity to feedback; especially, the countries that adopt leadership behaviours do not accept critical ideas, opinions, or feedback; and thus this may make the positive outcome from the application of feedback method questionable for LD. Accordingly, understanding the internal/external context may contribute to successful application and positive outcome from this method.

The next section considers another type of training and development interventions that target leaders.

2.5.3. High-Level Strategy Training and Courses

Top level leadership refers to organisation's vision, value, and mission. The decision made by leaders concerning the application of strategic initiatives may lead to either success or failure. This assumes that a top-level leader is also involved in the development process. It is argued that although the practice of executive development varies, current programmes include certain standard components (Conger and Benjamin, 1999). According to Storey (2004), for leaders at the highest level, the dominant way is based on sending the practice to them individually or in group often associated with prestigious business schools and qualifications for short executive courses. In this regard, recent debates have raised the role of Master Business Administration degree as a means for LD at strategic level (Roglio and Light, 2009; Barnett, 2005; Crotty and Soule, 1997).

Suutari and Viitala (2008) describe some leading LD methods used for developing most senior leaders that include, leadership training and education programmes, self-help activities and special job assignments (e.g. projects). They argue that there is a need to make balance between effectiveness and efficiency when choosing LD methods in practice. LD methods should be strategic activities related to strategic objectives and developmental needs of the companies and to the theory of leadership in use. Suutari and Viitala (2008) also note that traditional classroom and short-term training activities are very common in order to develop senior leaders.

As a result of the three development interventions and their contents above, the author attempts to tell the reader that theoretical components of LD methods/activities tend to be convergent because they are inevitably converging on a US model (Gooderham and Brewster, 2003), this was supported by (Weir, 2010) who stated that the West has influences on leadership training as a discipline, but the purpose of their application is totally relevant to the country characteristics in which development methods/activities are implemented, and the company characteristics for which these methods and activities are adopted.

The next section considers the common mechanisms used for understanding the leadership potentials for development in today's business.

2.6. IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Many studies on ‘context’ adopted a rather mechanistic approach, using the notion of a one-size-fits-all approach, which supports the idea that most types of leadership work with all types of context. Currently contemporary perceptions to leadership pay more attention to the interpretivist perspective, which allows invaluable insights into the socially constructed world of ‘perceived need’ for leadership (Storey, 2004). The nature of the contemporary competitive environment promotes that leaders must respond to the leadership needs while developing the capacity to manage the continuous changes (Storey, 2005). In this regard, Conger and Benjamin (1999) assert that, to regain a competitive edge, current companies are required to fundamentally alter the way they view their surrounding environment and conduct business.

Reputational Capital

The need for leadership today in an organisation is considered in terms of the notion of reputational capital from strategic management perspective, which would highlight the important role of internal and external stakeholder perceptions. Stiglitz (2002) asserts the importance of the demand for closer scrutiny and closer regulation of the relations between companies and their stakeholders in order to ensure that companies meet their obligations to all concerned.

Others argue that leaders must be able to solve complex and organizational problems and balance competing demands of external/internal stakeholders (Quinn *et al*, 1996). Criteria of leadership effectiveness, thus, require addressing the complex nature of what leaders must accomplish. Previous research indicates that successful leaders can balance amongst conflicting demands to take competing roles (Mumford et al, 2000; Daft and Lane, 2008). Similarly, Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, (2004) claim that leadership is not only about meeting people’s needs; it is fundamentally about engaging other partners in accomplishing and developing the shared objectives and vision, which relate to the characteristics of transformational leadership; and thus leadership is a supportive environment for creative thinking, challenging hypotheses, and the sensitivity to the needs of a wide set of internal/external stakeholders.

Fisscher and Nijhof (2005) stress that executive leaders must practice total quality management, which is an extension of stakeholder theory where this theory “requires that organizations have to make visible to the outside world that they are doing the right things and are doing them in the right way" (p.150). They, also, state that external interests should

be also considered due to their vital role into business needs for success through both innovation initiatives and quality improvement. Kline's (2006) view supports the earlier argument, noting that leaders must be concerned with diverse interests of stakeholders, but emphasised that most groups deserve appropriate consideration; he asserts that stakeholders had "a legitimate interest in the company" (p.59). According to stakeholder analysis, Burgoyne's (1999) states that who are interested in any type of social research serve to shape the reality of the perceived action where they will be affected by it. This helps to present the participants as an active part in the construction results, acting as an active factor in creating meaning. Consequently, Burgoyne asserts that stakeholder analysis allows sharing several characteristics of phenomenological research when capturing diverse facets of subjectivity over stakeholder's perception, action, thoughts, and experiences. In this vein, Burgoyne (1999) highlights the role of stakeholder analysis into LD, noting that a stakeholder analysis may allow identifying challenges at play with the development method or activity adopted. For instance, LD methods and activities may target managers at different managerial levels at the same programme, and thus, participating in the same programme may help to understand learning challenges through viewing leadership as a collective phenomenon among these managers.

For Smith et al (2004), the leadership needs for specific kind of leadership is connected to internal/external environment of any company, such as stakeholders' requirements. They indicate that transformational and contingency leadership provide with a full understanding of LD that rely on the contextual factors, which make one of these models more appropriate for organisational objectives. Smith and his colleagues suggest that unstable environments require the empowered dynamic culture of transformational leadership because this type of leadership empowers staff with a greater responsibility and encourages to innovate, and takes initiative and risk, while servant leadership culture is better to serve in more static environments because when a company enters the maturity stage, concern for the personal growth of staff, which servant type of leadership supports, tend to be significant for effective and successful company.

However, the relationship between leaders and the diverse interests of stakeholders tend to be ignored in some circumstances, or not necessary for development purposes and for identifying the requirements, particularly when small companies operate their businesses in environments, which are familiar to the owner or the top leader. this implies that individual development or even adopting informal and formal LD methods may not occur because the owner or top leader are more aware of what their companies' needs to support, and because they have influence on decisions about structure (Cheng-Low, 2007; Mabey and Thomson, 2001).

Additionally, it is argued that this type of companies adopts short-term strategies to survive, and identifying leadership skills for development seems to be not complicated because they can develop even by informal development methods (Smith et al, 2002; Bartram, 2005). This may suggest that identifying the leadership potential for development may differ not only because of such factors as, company size, sector, their international strategy, and business strategy (Worrall and Cooper, 2001), but also the differences of how each company evaluates and perceives their surrounding environments (Conger and Benjamin, 1999), and the relationship between leaders and the diverse interests of stakeholders.

Institutional isomorphism mechanisms

Organisation's associations can be noted as institutional actors, which serve to shape perception of organisation's leaders and their responses to developments. They can influence organisational culture, identify best practices, and propose strategic responses to environmental scenarios represented in threats and opportunities of any organisation (Nordqvist *et al,* 2010). Storey (2005) states that the perceived need for leadership and its development can be interpreted in a different means to explain this phenomenon from the angle of interpreting 'authority', noting that it may focus on leadership as a priority or for the kind of leadership solution perceived as appropriate.

In this vein, if the process of organisations becomes legitimised through the constraining environmental forces, this process is referred to as isomorphism. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) describe three institutional isomorphism mechanisms: mimetic, coercive and normative, which lead an organisation in an organisational field to homogenisation and conformity, and describe how organizations model themselves on other organizations that they perceive to be more legitimate or successful. In a related vein, isomorphism can also be associated with the process of professionalization, training, and education, which produce individuals of a similar disposition; in turn, this leads to the joint work to define conditions and methods of a particular profession or sector. They continue to indicate that isomorphism can come from formal and informal pressures exerted by other organizations upon which they are dependent, and also by cultural expectations in the society (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).

However DiMaggio and Powell, (1983), also state that these mechanisms propose that as actors try and change their respective organizations, isomorphic mechanisms tend to lead organizations to become more similar. If this seems to be true based upon what O'Toole et al (2002), and Torbert (1991) state in that leadership is singular, the argument by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) serves to help understanding why some types of leadership are not applied across different contexts; furthermore, leadership needs, expectations and the underlying cultures tend to be different across different environments; and thus these will affect the type and nature of leadership that is effective. Additionally, Lacy *et al*, (2012) reveal that the leading concept indicates that the conditions and requirements of current leadership may not work within the requirements of future leaders. The next generation of leaders will need to have a new set of skills and abilities to effectively manage sustainably.

According to all above, techniques for identifying leadership needs for development are becoming global; this does not reflect generic leadership needs for development because of the privacy of company and the country in which it operates.

2.7. CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The importance of context has been widely highlighted in the literature and in the current leadership research. It is argued that the development of leaders in isolation of context is ineffective and leads to failure in achieving the desired outcomes of LD activities. Consequently, a number of authors (e.g. Bolden, 2005; Strorey, 2011; Grint, 2005; Hartley, 2010) have proposed that LD should be aligned with a number of contextual factors that are categorised under institutional-cultural factors.

Evidence clearly shows that such contextual factors have implications for content and methods of LD and training (Storey, 2011). For example, Hannum *et al*, (2007) found that contextual factors influence LD design and implementation in ways that shape what is learned and how the evaluation is perceived. Broadly speaking, context may be defined as the internal/external factors, and the author adopts this division in order to help the reader follow these factors in an organised way (Brewster and Mayrhofer, 2011; Jackson and Schuler, 1995). Internal factors discussed under the headings: competitive strategy, technology, firm size, organisational culture; and external factors under the following headings: institutional factors international strategy, industry sector; and national culture.

Table 2.4: Contextual influences on leadership development

Internal Factors	External Factors
Competitive strategy	Institutional factors
Technology	International strategy
Firm size	Industry sector
Organisational culture	National culture

2.7.1. INTERNAL FACTORS

2.7.1.1. Competitive strategy

Competitive strategy is defined in different ways. Porter (1998) defined it as "the essence of coping with competition" (p. 21). For Porter, the main purpose of strategy is to position the company in a competitive way as to take advantage of weaknesses of others competitors. Competitive strategy focuses on achieving the best fit between a company and its surrounding environment based on an intimate understanding of both requirements (Bryson, 2011), and thus serves to identify the companies' challenges seen as an important factor influencing LD (Clarke et al, 2004; Jackson *et al.* 2011). Business strategies include sets of strategies, but two strategies tend to be more common in literature than others, namely, differentiation and cost leadership (Porter, 1998) are discussed in this section.

It is argued that behaviours/capabilities requirements become a more prevalent method of identifying the requirements of most leadership positions rather than job analysis tools because they serve to provide a more general description of roles and responsibilities associated across different leadership positions (Briscoe and Hall, 1999), and thus LD should begin and end with business's strategy and objectives in mind (Fulmer and Bleak, 2008). For instance, Salob and Greenslade (2005) find that the top twenty American companies in leader development closely linked development strategies with their business strategies. Porter, (1980), competitive advantage, differentiation and cost leadership strategies, requires different sets of human resource policies and practices to elicit specific behaviours and attitudes of individuals in order to encourage success.

For Porter (1985), differentiating strategy attempts to distinguish the firm from its competitors and to make it unique in its industry along some dimensions that are most valued by its customers, and hence giving it competitive advantage over its competitors. Ireland *et al*, (2008) note that firms adopting a differentiation strategy tend to respond to environmental change through quickly shifting services and their organisational processes to fit the change. Barney (2010) argues that the main sources of product differentiation include: differences in quality accompanied by differences in prices, differences in functional characteristics and structure, ignorance of buyers about the required qualities of good they are buying, promotion activity of sellers in specific advertising, differences in availability, and reputation.

Similarly, Akan et al (2006) stresses that differentiation can be successful and effective only when it is associated by some tactics: (1) extensive training of marketing personnel, providing high-level customer service, providing speciality products/services, and developing a broad range of new products or services, (2) developing brand identification and extensive training of front-line personnel, (3) targeting a specific market, (4) fostering innovation and creativities, (5) technology and methods, (6) utilizing advertising, (7) building a positive relationship within the industry for technological leadership, (8) innovation in marketing. This is because the implications of such tactics to managers and decision makers will allow them to gain the knowledge of how to better tailor their strategy implementation to more effectively implement. This increases the need for specific leadership skills and abilities that support such strategy because leaders transfer to their followers their own experience and knowledge, and this can be reflected on the common objectives, actions and set the strategy and decision making direction for their subordinates to follow (Tichy, 1997).

This was evident in Hamel (1994) who suggests that most companies have competences, but identifying them and deciding on how best to leverage them against opportunities tend to be important. For example, Arthur (1992) asserts that differentiation strategy needs different HR practices even policies that include a high-quality training, decentralised decision-making, transformational skills, such as motivation, creating opportunity of individuals, teamwork, empowering staff, and commitment.

Research findings reveal that LD is extensively related to differentiation strategy, and there needs for adopting HRM to develop the correct competencies of individuals to use such strategy effectively (Dalakoura, 2010). This suggests that companies that adopt differentiation strategy require different leadership behaviours/capabilities from those who adopt different business strategy.

In turn, cost leadership strategy is associated with a set of characteristics that include tight control by a functional structure with highly centralized authority to provide more effective services, reduced skills requirements and training. Companies that use this strategy attempt to increase market share by the focus on low cost compared to other competitors (Daft et al, 2010).

Boxall and Purcell, (2000) claim that HR practices must be designed to reinforce the behavioural implication of Porter's strategies. Therefore, the performance of company improves when its HR practices mutually reinforce the company's selection of porter's strategies. This may support the idea that adopting LD interventions that deliver specific behaviours/capabilities may not work with some companies for reasons only related to the nature and the kind of strategy adopted. For example, Nikandrou and Panayotopoulou, (2012) stress that for performing a specific task, individuals require technical knowledge, skills, and behaviours/capabilities that stem from the context in which they operate the business. The application of such roles requires different strategies that fit different organisational conditions because companies may not adopt the same business strategy (Albaum and Duerr, 2008; Herrmann, 2008).

However, it is still controversial in the strategic management literature that companies pursue differentiation strategy or cost leadership strategy. Al-Zoubi, (2012) argues that leadership competencies have a significant influence on both differentiation and cost leadership, and accompany the relationship between leadership competences and competitive advantages (differentiation and cost leadership), because there needs for both strategies. Empirical research supports the previous argument, from measuring the fit between differentiation strategy and developmental HRM practices and the fit between cost leadership strategy and HRM performance management practice. This research asserts that no assumption can be made to support one to pursue over the other or the cost leadership and differentiation strategies are mutually exclusive (Roberts, 2004). But such empirical research lacks the potential to explain why some leadership competencies are supported by specific competitive strategy; while others are not; because this would help illustrate why companies adopt and develop their leadership on the base of their business strategy.

Fulmer and Bleak, (2008) discuss competitive strategy in-depth and its relationship to LD by their model that illustrates capabilities required, and intermediate steps when moving from current reality of company to its destination desired. They assert that well-developed competitive strategy provides direction on the procedures and steps for identifying the requirements for developing leadership. They note, also, that an effective strategy serves to determine a company's current reality and its required destination based on what it needs to develop, filling the gap between company reality and its destination desired requires increasing individual competency and building organisational capability. This can only be achieved by a well-developed competitive strategy that identifies direction on the procedures to be taken for developing skills, and by behaviours that are based on leaders' requirements. Bolt, (2004) argues that LD architecture must be integrated to the strategy and business needs to increase the potential for impact and produce support.

Day, (2001) states that LD must be based on business strategy adopted by companies, regardless of the type of business strategy because the purpose of most LD practice is to improve leadership skills, the ability to manage, and productivity in a competitive and changing environment. Day notes that companies must be clear about which business they are in and what they want to achieve within their business to ensure their success and effectiveness. It is argued that strategic orientation of the company tends to be aligned to the business type of the company (Iturrioz *et al*, 2010), which help to explain its LD practices (Carvan, et al, 2004).

Competitive strategy is termed as a critical factor influencing LD in such empirical research studies as Stank et al, (2012) who emphases the need for capabilities and core competencies in corporate level decision-making to help managers effectively to understand how better allocate assets and cost to drive significant improvement in organisational financial performance; Fulmer and Bleak, (2008) who linked between competitive strategy and LD via determining the leadership capabilities required; Arthur, (1992) who linked between the type of competitive strategies and the LD. This is because many companies in today's business are becoming more competitive by launching competitive strategies that provide them an edge over others. To do this, they need to craft differentiation strategy (Porter, 1985). However, most organisations are not able to formulate such strategy required to gain competitive advantage. To formulate the previous argument in an example, it may be stated that the extent to which differentiation strategy committed to LD is influenced by the level of stability. Otherwise, it may be useless, and also adopting low cost leadership strategy in specific environment may reduce the opportunity for LD due to the lack of its interest on LD. Accordingly, the researcher believes that competitive strategy has influence on the nature of LD, and should be explored in specific types of companies and all environments. The next section highlights the influence of companies' size on the form of LD. 2.7.1.2. Company Size It is argued that company size is somewhat related to various aspects of organisational functioning and environment characteristics (Camison-Zornoza *et al*, 2004; Kulkarni and Osiski, 2010). Company size is investigated in terms of the application of HRM practices across three types of companies: small, medium, and large, acting as a significant variable in explaining LD activity. Most findings in SMEs research activities (Marshall *et al*., 1995; Westhead and Story, 1997; Gray, 2011) show that there are contradictory findings between large and small and medium-sized enterprises in LD.

Mabey and Finch-Lee (2007) stress that LD is influenced by company size because the number of people contributes to shape the concept of the leader's role and responsibilities. For example, Brown (2011) highlights the influence of company size on leadership role development, noting that there is a strong relationship between company size and the number of people involved in organisational planning and leadership.

Ryan (2008) asserts that the size of company brings benefits and challenges, and there needs to be a balance between its requirements and its individual requirements because companies develop their HR practices and policies based on their requirements and environment in which they operate. The nature of LD in different companies' size was investigated by several researchers (Fuller-Love, 2006; Tell, 2012; Gray and Mabey, 2005; Wong *et al*, 2000). Some studies link between the lack of formal development practice and factors such resource constraints, marginality, and isolation of some small companies that reflect their strategic choice (Curran *et al*, 1998).

But there are additional reasons that make small companies differ from large companies regarding formal LD activities. For example, Story and Westhead (1996) note that the challenge that faces small and medium-sized enterprises involves the cost of investment in LD, as it is higher for small companies because participants come from different small companies in which participants and their businesses are at different levels of development. Furthermore the ability to have resources for development has implication for adopting formal training and development. Klaas *et al*, (2000) argue that HRM activities including training practices require considerable budgets of development, which can influence training practices in small companies rather than large companies.

Therefore, Westhead and Story, (1997) and Curran *et al*, (1998) suggest that small companies mostly depend on informal leadership activities because this type of companies prefers survival training and development over the short term planning and rely on informal learning programmes. Additionally, Hill and Stewart, (2000) assert that small companies focus on informal training and development because they are easily integrated into everyday work, and can focus on the specific requirements of individuals and involve lower costs.

Smith et al, (2002) indicate that informal development activities help individuals to learn because skills are daily utilized. Research evidence shows that small companies use more workplace innovation than using formal management practices because managers in small companies are influenced by managerial fads, which is not seen in large companies (Bartram, 2005). This may suggest that small companies ignore what theory of leadership is being used because of the difficult to apply theory of leadership in this context.

However, different views are proposed by Gray and Mabey, (2005) who suggest that when small companies utilize formal LD activities, they report higher growth than those who use informal LD activities. This is because the owners and top leaders in small companies are more aware of their companies' needs, and because they have influence on decisions about structure and over work performance (Cheng-Low, 2007; Mabey and Thomson, 2001).

However, the influence of company size on LD is criticised by Bartlett and Ghoshal (1997), who note that company size does not have such importance rather they argue that companies face challenges in developing their leadership because of what is called *the historic Russian Doll Model of Management* in which leaders at each level play similar role and have similar responsibilities, only for a different size and scope activities. They stress that leadership role varies across different leadership levels and require different development strategies.

It is argued that each firm size can explain its use of formal and informal LD activities based on its requirements due of the differences in terms of resources development (Klaas et al, 2000), the number of employees (Brown, 2011), and strategic development choice (Curran et al, 1998) amongst small, medium and large firms. Thus firms' size is termed as a critical factor influencing the leadership behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods, which suit each firm size because there is no agreement in literature whether small and large firms are similar in different institutional contexts across different countries in previous empirical research studies (Curran et al, 1998; Klaas et al, 2000; Fuller-Love, 2006; Tell, 2012; Bartram, 2005; Gray and Mabey, 2005). The next section highlights the influence of technology on leadership learning and development.

2.7.1.3. Technology Issues

Technology is seen as basis for business needs, and used as a tool that enables individual or groups to communicate and learn together by sharing their interests. Technology, acting as a fundamental tool of a company facilitates daily business jobs and HR development. The use of technology in companies often reflects technology infrastructure of the countries in which these companies operate.

Macpherson (2000) argues that technology is not a neutral force rather it plays a fundamental role in redesigning how people believe and cooperate amongst themselves through the impact of information and communication technology on people development. Macpherson shows that technology serves to steer the organisational assumptions when using technology-based distributed learning, acting as a means for flexible learning. Sakes and Haccoun, (2010) stress the influential role of technology on the way companies operate by providing companies the required improvements in productivity and competitive advantages, but they noted that the improvements occur if people receive the required training that facilitate this kind of learning when delivering courses. For example, Brynjolfsson (2003) reveals that technology investments enable a competitive advantage when the company uses technology to do distinctive things that are not done by other companies and once companies use technology in a similar way, they will not have a competitive advantage. Brynjolfsson notes that the productivity differs based on how companies choose to use the technology.

Bates (2002) claims that innovations in technology facilitate most processes of globalisation, which serves to illustrate how leaders learn and conceptualise their practices. Avolio and

Kahai (2003) argue that technology influences leadership in different ways, and assert that technology facilitates the opportunities of LD through adopting online courses or CD-based training and development programs. Webber, (2003) describes in-depth the role of a technology-mediated LD network in learning. Webber highlights the components of a technology-mediated LD network, which include face-to-face, and online cross-role discussion groups, annual seminar series, graduate degree programming, an online refereed journal, summer institutes, university partnerships, and cross-cultural research, which help change the focus, magnitude, and audience of leadership network challenges.

Consequently, technology infrastructure has become a challenge to LD because today's business proposes that companies need for cutting-edge LD technologies (Conner, 2000; Hernez-Broome and Hughes, 2004; Antes and Schuelke, 2011). Additionally, many studies suggest that the use of technology across different countries tends to be different due to the differences in technology infrastructure (Lall, 1995; Corrocher, 2002), which implies that the use of learning-based technology to implement LD programmes/content and methods may not be similar across countries. This is evident in Spreitzer (2008), who highlighted the sophistication of most online and CD-based LD methods because a significant number of leaders are still uncomfortable with technology. In particular, they have been educated before the age of personal computers, and thus they need special technical training and support to become comfortable with technology for learning and development purposes. This suggests that there are challenges to transfer learning-based technology for LD because companies still require making capital investments to implement robust technology-based learning and development programmes within their organisations (Yearout et al, 2001).

Empirical research proposes that people's knowledge in technology serves to contribute to the effective and practical application of management practices within companies through their role in facilitating this process; therefore this study indicates that there is strong relationship between technology and HRD including leadership (Hughes, 2009). The role of technology in today business is termed as a critical factor influencing LD in previous empirical research studies (Conner, 2000; Antes and Schuelke, 2011; Webber, 2003; Avolio and Kahai, 2003; Antes and Schuelke, 2011). Particularly, successful companies in today's business require cutting-edge LD technologies.

The next section considers the influence of organisational culture on LD.

2.7.1.4. Organisational culture

It refers to a set of shared values, beliefs, practices, assumptions that emerge from the interactions of company members and shape the ways in which members in a company behave and make things done (Armstrong, 2012; Sakes and Haccoun, 2010). It is argued that all companies have their cultures, but some companies' cultures may be stronger than others.

Daft (2009:387) notes that a strong culture that supports adaptation and change enhances organisational performance by motivating staff, collecting staff around shared mission, and guiding behaviours. Amagoh (2009) asserts that an organisational culture that supports learning and development is very crucial for the application of LD because building leaders who can deal effectively with organisational challenges require developmental activities that are systematically integrated into organisational culture. It is argued that research on LD link between developing leadership skills and top management's support or an organisational culture that supports learning and development (Yukl, 2010; Ford and Weissbein, 1997).

Lester, (2008) states that LD acknowledges the important role of organisational culture in addressing career flexibility and in educating programme participants. He notes that change culture was affected by a) creating institutional support for programmes via cultivating a culture of acceptance for LD programmes, and by b) changing the culture via cultivating the change agents within the programmes. According to Guidroz *et al*, (2010), integrating LD with organizational culture helps to create a clear vision between an individual and an organization, and builds organisation-wide accountability for the success of organizational change.

This carries the need for reinforcing an organizational culture supporting LD to improve the performance of leaders and companies. Research findings suggest that the integration of LD and succession planning practices require a strong culture that uses managerial staff in developing mentor network of the company, identifies high potential staff, develops high potential via project-based learning, and creates organisation-wide forums (Groves, 2007).

However, Armitage et al (2006) claim that four processes are required to be used for ensuring successful leaders. These processes are: a) identifying ability and capability gaps, b) creating developmental plan to fill gaps based on learning dependencies, c) providing developmental opportunity, d) monitoring performance. They note that no LD process can make companies successful in changing environments if a leader attempts to change the culture of resistant to change in a company. In this regard, understanding organisational culture is vital for the application of LD because organisational culture, as Jones (2009) puts it, may resist change and makes it difficult, and this is likely to be because of the lack of change culture.

According to Hofstede (1980), the differences in applying leadership behaviours across different countries can be traced to individuals' differences across national cultures. In this vein, some studies argue that organisational culture is a mirror of its national culture and these studies argue that when a national culture is deeply ingrained in individuals, it is reflected in organizational culture (Van Oudenhoven, 2001; Naor et al, 2010). Harrison and John (2008) link organisational culture with the values and leadership behaviours, and claim that organisational culture is the result of HRM practices which reinforces some types of leadership behaviours. In this regard, Bass (1985) argues that an organisational culture evolves from its leadership and organisational culture influences the evolution of its leadership, in turn. For instance, Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2003b) link between LD and transformational leadership because the content of transformational leadership focuses on the individual requirements regarding development.

Organisational culture is termed as a critical factor influencing LD in previous empirical research (Amagoh, 2009; Guidroz et al, 2010; Armitage et al, 2006; Bal and Quinn, 2004). The literature suggests that organisational culture is the mirror for the national culture of any country and poor development culture tends to be somewhat influenced by national culture. Therefore, this carries the importance for understanding the relationship between national culture and organisational culture for different companies types because this may help understand how LD is applied across different types of companies in context-specific and how this context may differ from other contexts.

2.7.2. EXTERNAL FACTORS

2.7.2.1. Institutional factors

Understanding LD today from the lens of institutions is very crucial in shaping LD. Scott (2005) stated that “Institutional theory attends to the deeper and more resilient aspects of social structure. It considers the processes by which structures, including schemas; rules, norms, and routines, become established as authoritative guidelines for social behaviour” (p.460). Additionally, Scott (2001) indicates that “institutions are social structures that have attained a high degree of resilience; institutions are composed of cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life” (p.48).

Scott (1995) suggests three categories of institutional system that will be beyond the discussion of this section: regulative system; normative system; cognitive system. *Regulative system* derives from studies in economic and promulgation of laws, and industrial agreements with which organizations are led and obliged to comply. *Normative system* represents models of organizational and individuals' behaviour rooted in obligatory factors of social life and organizational interaction, where such system is typically composed of the development of rules, procedures, routine, value, norms, training programs educational programs (Garud *et al* 2002; Bruton *et al* 2010). *Cognitive system* embodies the individual behaviour rooted in constructed rules that constitute the nature of social reality and frames by which meaning is made (Scott, 2003). It is argued that the key purpose of training and development is to help people to fill their position sufficiently and help the whole organization to grow. Thus, the title of training and development has changed to mirror missions, such as Organizational development or HRD (Laird et al, 2003).

As institutional context refers to how organizations adapt to their environment (Borkowski et al, 2011), organizations seek to improve their performances to obtain legitimacy and acceptance for their survival in socially constructed environments because acceptance and legitimacy are thought from stakeholders; especially, several constituencies control resources needed (Rohmetra, 2005).

For LD, it may be stated that organisations attempt to improve their performance by developing their leadership; this can occur by identifying leadership needs via looking at internal/external stakeholders. For example, 360-degree feedback tends to be an effective method for developing leadership because performance differs across different environments; and behavioural requirements/capabilities also differs based on the own requirements of each organisation or constituency with different constituencies. Previous research suggests that organisations are strongly affected by external belief systems through which they build their beliefs and through which they are understood (Bilimoria and Piderit, 2007).

Bruton, et al (2010) note institutional discourse is concerned with social, economic, political and cultural effects which promotes survival organization rather than focusing on behaviour. It is argued there are certain differences in the way companies develop their leaders in terms of skills and methods where such discourse contributes to explain the differences in country systems of LD because national labour markets tend to specialize in one type of skill (Estevez-Abe *et al.*, 2001).

Additionally, Whitley, (1992) argues that business systems across countries depend on institutional factors and labour market analysis to illustrate the main differences in the way countries organize their economic decision-making processes; he notes that the types of skills that are delivered by companies to their leaders to develop across different organisational level and how leaders view their learning and development may be influenced by social system in which they live, grow, learn, and work.

Empirical research by Ramirez, (2004) reveals that the dominant skill type of leaders is related to labour market at each country. The findings provide different skill types amongst six European countries because of the differences of national characteristics supporting leadership skills.

Similarly, Martineau and Patterson, (2010) believe that the differences of social systems have a great influence not only for deeper understanding of LD practices, but on identifying the best design of its development. This is supported by Mabey and Finch-Lee (2007) who claim that this approach tends to illustrate why some leaders' behaviours are stemmed from national system despite of the global tendency of most companies; and also serves to illustrate why some companies learn from other success companies and adopt similar development strategy.

In this regard, Yadapadithaya (2000) argues that there are several issues that affect the policies of HRD in organizations: 1) the public policy which refers to the government strategy; 2) educational infrastructure 3) Academic work in the training and development sector which refers to empirical work on training and development; 4) training and development infrastructure. For instance, the Japanese and American systems of HRD are similar in that students go to general secondary education after completing basic education; after that, they choose either higher education or companies which offer training upon initiation; while the German system of education and training is based on the duality between schools that are based on general instruction and companies that are based on specific training regulated by industry federations. Thus, this model in Germany is distinguished by qualifications, which are regulated by guilds offering equivalent opportunity between the academic graduates and the dual subsystems (Ferranti, 2003). In the French system, students who go to vocational-technical education, which starts at secondary school, are prepared for entry into the labour market and students who go to the humanistic-scientific stream will be prepared for tertiary education; while the Latin American system of training is a hybrid system between the German and French systems (Ferranti, 2003). Thus, public educational policies reflect the differences of values attached to learning which lead to individuals training and development.

This can illustrate the implications for education systems on LD. Macpherson (2009) uses international policy research to clarify policy options for Australasian education systems. He notes that Australasian education system is well advised to address emergent crises in the quality and quantity of supply by developing integrated educational LD policies and programmes with particular features, which include: active learning, skills training and higher education connected to practice, a career-related learning framework, effective role transitions, summative and formative evaluation, a validated indigenous knowledge base in a multi-cultural context, and a research and development role for universities.

Drawing on this, considerable evidence suggests that institutional differences have an essential role in the way in which global techniques and procedures are implemented across different countries (Briscoe and Schuler, 2004). For example, a practical study of three Chinese societies provides evidence that HR practices and their effectiveness rely on how they fit the institutional environment, noting that in the People's Republic of China (PRC) there is a positive attitude toward training and most companies are willing to invest in training and development of most their employers, while in Hong Kong companies, training does not have the same importance (Chow, 2004). This is attributed to three issues: HR practices are systematically different; the workforce of (PRC) companies has different characteristics, such as lower level of education and lags behind in skills; the lack of professional and managerial talents.

However, different countries may have different goals regarding their education system (Follesdal and Pogge, 2005), and some researchers argue that LD should be considered based on the market direction (Moser and Williams, 2012; Cappelli, 2000), which increase the common needs for practices. In this regard, Dorfman and House (2004) state that the idea of cultural convergence has become reality through the growth of international convergence that practices and behaviours across different countries tend to become similar.

Research findings by Ryan *et al*, (2012) emerged from North America and the European Union reveal the degree of cross-cultural validity for leadership competencies. The findings reveal the influence of culture is not a matter in their research analysis, but they argue the convergence of leadership competencies that serve LD in North America and the European Union. This practical evidence may support the argument that some HR practices including leadership may become easier to transfer (Wu, 2004; Gamble, 2003). Similarly, Day and Halpin, (2001) suggest that LD practices can be designed and delivered in a variety of ways, but the purpose of such practices is not alike.

For Fulkerson and Schuler, (1992), although the diverse development practices implemented by company, the focus should be based on how best to identify the practices required in LD methods because there need to design and deliver leadership competencies framework that serve a fit-all-objective leadership behaviours/capabilities, which a company needs to overcome its challenge and achieve its objective (e.g. Barrett and Beeson, 2002; Yearout et al, 2001). This may increase the need for defining the leadership competencies required by considering institutional-cultural context.

Although little research evidence support the application of fit-for-all approach across countries (Ralston et al, 2006), there are still some countries that are sensitive toward issues such as the influence of family; group orientation and relationship; honour and loyalty; colonialism; politic system, and influence of religion, which their effective LD depend on a greater understanding of institutional factors (Weir, 2010). Accordingly, Pudelko (2005) claims that understanding learning from best practice in different countries is based on pursuing the closely interlinked convergence–divergence research that requires further investigating of the leadership competencies/capabilities required.

The role of institutional environment in training and development is termed as a critical factor influencing LD in previous empirical research (Ramirez, 2004; Estevez *et al*, 2001; Lam, 1994; Sheehan, 2012; Peretz and Rosenblatt, 2011). Other studies support the idea that institutional context does not have such influence on LD (Gooderham and Brewster, 2003; Brewster *et al*, 2004; Geppert et al, 2002). Although this study does not differentiate between convergence and divergence in LD practices, it indicates that adopting different LD practices may not be existed across countries because the differences are connected to the mechanism of how companies implement LD practices (Brewster *et al*, 2004). This is supported by Lane (1989) who argues: “although organizational goals may not differ significantly across organizations, courses of action towards those goals do, because action is socially constructed and hence shaped by culture as manifested in societal institutions” (p.34). In this study, the researcher believes that there needs for examining how LD occurs and the challenges that face it based upon the basis of country-by-country because in some circumstances culture may not have such influence if a country has LD convergence with other countries (Geppert et al, 2002).

The next section considers the role of sector type into training and development, and its implications for the application of LD.

2.7.2.2 Industry Sector

A number of studies emphasised the critical importance of industry sector as a contextual factor influencing the receptivity to different types of leadership and approaches to LD (Mole, 2004; Storey et al, 1997; Pinnington, 2011; Brundrett, 2001; Daresh and Male, 2000; Blandford and Squire, 2000; Avolio and Bass, 1988). In terms of leadership receptivity, a number of scholars (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Bass and Riggio, 2006; McDermott et al, 2011) highlighted the influence of sector on leadership behaviour and how leadership roles are performed, how effective they are and how they are perceived. In terms of development, Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2003b), for example, link between the transformational leadership and the evolution of sectors because the contents of transformational leadership focus on the development needs of individuals, which encourage different sectors to adopt this type of leadership.

Other researchers note that different industry sectors tend to follow different paths, which called for sector-specific factors (Wood and Tasker, 2011). Consequently, Sim and Quatro, (2005) assert that there is a need to a particular leadership in different industry sectors because the company's objectives of each sector tend to be different due to their focus on different aspect of business. Other studies reveal the particularities of leadership in different sectors. For example, Brundrett (2001), who tracked the headteachers leadership programmes, drew comparisons and contrasts between headteachers as leaders in two countries, the UK and USA, and linked LD with institution features that shape the leadership into its sector in the UK and USA.

Similarly, Bolden *et al* (2003) presented a range of different leadership models and competency frameworks currently used amongst private sector and public sector companies and found that each company in each sector has its own leadership competency framework that fits its purposes. This may suggest that LD may differ based on the type of sector; and thus this will reflect on the type of LD interventions because of sector-specific requirements and purposes (Wood and Tasker, 2011). In relation to this, for example, Chait et al (2004) argue that non-profit organisations focus often on governance effectiveness, service offered to community, and boardroom contribution, while for-profit companies focus more on financial tasks and accountability. State organisations focus often on political savvy and building coalitions (Horey and Fallesen, 2003). Accordingly, Prowle (2000) claims that strategy aspects of training and development tend to be different across sectors due to the differences in the strategic choice at each sector.

Research evidence collected by Pinnington, (2011) examines LD in the private, public, and non-profit sectors, and assesses the extent to which these sectors constitute distinctive contexts for leadership approaches and practices. Pinnington argues that LD activities are similar between different sector types. The findings also offer some evidence for sector differences in that leadership is conceptualized and practised with a greater emphasis placed on normative and ethical considerations in the public and not-for-profit sectors, while LD in the private sector is more strongly motivated by instrumental economic concerns. In a related vein, Mabey and Finch-Lee (2007) argue that the design of company-level LD will be influenced by sector-specific qualifications' structures.

This raises the role of sector, acting as a part of institutional scenery through its different development trends. Empirical research compares LD systems in different private sectors companies in Europe conducted by (Mabey and Ramirez, 2012) who note that the budgets for LD practices differ between the companies. They argue that the key factor influencing training and development is strategy that each sector adopts. Sakes and Haccoun, (2010) suggest that companies located in the sectors that align human resource practices with a company's business strategy and which experience dramatic structural changes may provide greater training activities.

Similar findings about sector characteristics, such as budget, structure, strategy choice, or location were proposed by Storey et al (1997) who analysed the processes and methods used to develop leaders in eight matched organizations from two different countries. Their findings reveal some differences that conform to national stereotype. Storey notes that the differences amongst these companies are because of the sector in which such companies are located rather than their context characteristics. This carries for the vital role of the sector type to develop the behaviours/capabilities required in leadership that meet the specific needs of each sector. Consequently, the literature suggests that the type of company sector contributes to define the type of leadership competencies and development methods that are implemented at each sector. The next section considers the influence of international strategy LD.

2.7.2.3. International Strategy

Although there is little evidence to suggest that the economies of scale associated with MNCs allow access to richer resources for LD than it is possible for local companies, the concept of LD in local context is greatly influenced by multinational parent company because multinational parent company seeks to promote a corporate brand image and culture across all of their subsidiaries, exemplify the globalisation culture (Martin, 2012), develop talents of local leaders (Sparrow et al, 2004), and identify high-potential leaders all of which serve to maintain a company's future (Black et al, 1999).

Although MNCs tend to apply generic HR practices including LD with some autonomy in terms of the application (Cullen and Parboteeah, 2013; Tregaskis, 2001), most studies focus on transferring the parent multinational companies' practices to their global subsidiaries (Schuler et al, 2002), rather than focusing on HRM practices and policies within the parent country of company. Tayeb (1998) argues that multinational companies' practices are more prone to the local cultural influence than are their policies and strategies. He notes that some practices require modification to be applied because of the privacy of each national culture. Similarly, research evidence that examines the adaptation of organisational practices by MNC subsidiaries, suggests that there are two factors influencing the adoption of practices: the institutional profile of the host country and the relational context within the MNC (Kostova and Roth, 2002).

Others argue that HR practices like training and LD delivery are influenced by a company's international strategy (Bernardin, 2002; Cray and Mallory, 1998). This carries for the need to compare HR practices included LD based on Adler and Ghadar's classifications of the type of companies: domestic, international, MNC, and global companies because these classifications help explain how companies apply LD and understand its requirements (Adler and Ghadar, 1991).

For example, Morrison (2000) claims that the challenge of developing better global leaders has fallen on HR managers who have largely been oriented to domestic leadership models, and argues that for global companies, global leaders need a range of skills and global business perspectives. Research evidence shows that foreign companies including multinational companies operate in China require developing HRM under the local culture, which is one of the critical reasons affecting the success of such multinational companies. This research suggests developing management practices including effective communication skills, taking into an account the local culture in performance assessment, individual career development, localization of management team (Zhou et al, 2005).

Although some studies propose that most domestic companies are moving increasingly to become global companies (Knight and Cavusgil, 2004; Wang, 2012), domestic companies tend to have less pressure regarding HRD including LD compared to multinational companies. Therefore, International strategy has been termed as a critical factor influencing LD in previous empirical research studies (Tayeb, 1998; Zhou et al, 2005; Morrison, 2000; Kamoche, 2000; Bernardin, 2002; Cray and Mallory, 1998). This carries the importance for the need to examine this factor on LD in specific country. The next section will consider the national culture.

2.7.2.4. National Culture

Culture can refer to different issues, but in this study it involves national culture and organisational culture. It is argued an understanding of culture values and how they affect business organisation serves understanding LD (Moua, 2010; Martineau and Patterson, 2010). The concept of leadership has been investigated either as a convergent or divergent phenomenon across different national cultures, and the work of Hofstede's model may be a fundamental source of explaining LD, which is discussed below.

Power Distance

Power distance (PD) that is one of Hofstede's cultural dimensions associated with leadership, which carries important implication for the degree to which individual of a company or society agree that power is unequally shared (Hofstede, 2001; Chhokar et al, 2007). This dimension is observed in three indicators of decision-making: styles of decision-making, and types of decision-making, and fear to disagree with superiors.

It is argued that low power distance cultures are likely to be characterised by the value that inequalities between individuals need to be reduced with existing of hierarchal system (Yan and Hunt, 2005). The relationship between leaders and followers is equal, and subordinates are given the opportunity to participate in decision-making in a group-oriented and participative activity (Hofstede, 2001; Van Der Vegt *et al*, 2005; Jinj-Lih *et al*, 2007). In this vein, Day (2007) argues that the value of participants and shared leadership work best with low power distance culture.

For example, Byrne and Rees, (2006:25) asserts when organisational culture supports learning and development, it reflects positively on their leadership because their leaders will develop. They note that this can be only achieved when organisational culture consists of such factors as: openness of opinion; shared vision, mission, and value; using participatory leadership style; and empowerment of staff. This may require developing specific behaviours/capabilities that work, or accompany with the types of leadership used in the low power distance culture, such as transformational skills (Kirkman et al, 2009). However, such skills may be met with resistance in societies that have a high power distance. For example, Weir, (2010) indicates that Arab society is characterised as a high (PD) culture because Arab world is a patriarchal society, which is seen in organisational structure in which top-down authority is the norm, and thus the locus of power and control comes from the patriarchal style of leadership.

For high power distance societies, they are more characterised by the acceptance of inequality between individuals, and existing barriers regulate any attempt to make relationship with superiors (Begley et al, 2001). Leadership in high power distance society is not seen as a position earned because of high performance of a leader, rather it is seen as endowed by the structural position that a leader occupies. High PD society tends to be “more stratified economically, socially, and politically; those in positions of authority expect, and receive, obedience” (Javidan et al, 2006:70). Furthermore, decision making is centralised in the hands of only few individuals who follow the force policy in an organisation, and there is a lack of professional and personal opportunity for development and between genders within the organisation (Carl et al, 2004).

Some researchers argue that high power distance can affect some LD methods that focus on assessment process because candidates are hard on their reports and tend to be more subservient to their superiors (Hofstede, 2005; Carey et al, 2010). In this regard, Munusamy et al (2010) claim that, in high PD, feedback from a subordinate to a boss is not seen as important and is likely to be dismissed as unacceptably new because high PD cultures that emphasize respect for authority and indirect communication, and upward feedback tend to be less accepted. Understanding power distance dimension as a cultural factor is important for diagnosing and delivering LD because the way organisations adopt their LD activities serves to convey strong signals about what is needed and what behaviours will be rewarded (Sparrow, 1996). Sparrow further adds that such perceptions are socially constructed and heavily filtered through power distance.

Individualism-Collectivism

Individualism-collectivism is seen as a sensitive dimension (Berry et al, 1997) and has implications for the way on which individuals interact within their organisational structure (Sparrow, 1996; Hofstede, 1997, 2001), and is seen as highly relevant for organisational practices and leadership work (Gelfand *et al*, 2004; Gelfand, *et al*, 2007; Hofstede, 2001). Individualism-collectivism value can reflect the way in which LD is implemented and delivered. Triandis (1993) indicates that individualism culture is likely to value an achievement orientations and participative leadership, and collectivist culture expects effective leaders to be supportive and paternalistic. Choi and Yoon, (2005) state that in an individual culture, people are more responsive to a leader individual expertise than those in collectivist culture who are more prone to create ideological leader because of the focus on shared social roles (Kuhnen *et al*, 2001). According to Van De Vliert and Smith (2004), leaders in individualist culture depend more on their followers for information and for delegation of responsibilities than those who in collectivist cultures; while Jung and Avolio, (1999) claim that leaders in a collectivist culture have more long-term relation with their companies that work with and value interpersonal skills than those who in individualist culture

Overall many researchers suggest that leadership theory in individualist culture focus on participative leadership and charismatic and transformational leadership (Dickson *et al*, 2003; Hofstede, 2001; Judge et al., 2004). This carries the need for particular behaviours and capabilities to respond the characteristics of a specific culture (Javidan *et al*, 2006; Dorfman *et al*, 1997).

As organizational culture is related to human resource practices (Schneider and Barsoux 2003), LD practices may have distinctive characteristics in a specific culture because leadership research is conducted in western countries, and the findings from individualist cultures may not be implemented in collectivist cultures (Hofstede and Hofstede 2005; Javidan and Dastmalchian 2009).

For example, Hogg's works (2001, 2003), on prototypes' learning, may serve to provide a clear understanding of how participants react to LD programmes because the implications of outcome for prototype on LD is in that individuals from social identity group may practice different access to opportunities for development (Douglas, 2003; Sinclair, 2009), such as external courses in collective society or individual society.

Masculinity

The development of masculinity and femininity practice is an outcome of conventions across cultures. Hofstede (2001) asserts that management is a result of the masculine American and British cultures, which indicates that management across cultures may not to be all masculine. Arrindell *et al*, (2004) and Hofstede, (2001) state that feminist societies have feminist heroes that seeks cooperation and consensus in leadership, such as Sweden and Denmark; while masculine societies have masculine heroes that are characterised by assertiveness, decisiveness, and aggressiveness, such as Italy and Japan. Hofstede (1980:2001) also explicitly linked masculinity and femininity to gender differences, and showed that women in masculine societies tend to be modest and tender, and men tend to be assertive and strong; while in femininity societies both men and women tend to be modest and tender.

Blagoev, (2010) stresses that leadership that reflects the level of masculinity is evident in the natural rewards element for its emphasis on achievement rather than relationship, while leadership in femininity societies is precisely the opposite. It is argued that the behavioural-focus and constructive thought strategies do not reveal a clear inclination for masculinity or femininity (Alves *et al*, 2006). Consequently, this may help explain the implication of the prioritization of achievement versus personal relationships in the workplace for the application of LD practices in femininity and masculinity societies.

Uncertainty avoidance

This dimension refers to the way that a culture responds to risks and changes and how it deals with ambiguity (Hofstede 2001). Three indicators suggested by Hofstede to measure this dimension, namely, rule orientation, stress, and employment stability. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, individuals prefer employment stability and formal rules, but individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures are open to change and prefer flexible jobs and roles and tend to be mobile when coming to jobs.

Hofstede, (1980) states that an organisation with high uncertainty avoidance tends to utilise more control practices as it lacks confidence and belief in its members' leadership abilities, and rationality, and hence focuses on using vertical style of leadership. Furthermore, research evidence indicates that high uncertainty avoidance cultures value leadership behaviours that encourage job stability and formal rules, individual and organisation development, and planning by all forms of control (Dickson et al, 2003). In contrast, Hofstede (2001) notes that in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, an organisation tends to have transformational leadership style that focuses on shared decision-making among organisational members, and belief and confidence in their leadership abilities. Research evidence shows that low uncertainty avoidance societies value career mobility, innovation, are open to change and flexibility, and use general skills rather than specific or specialised ones (Dickson *et al*, 2003).

Overall, it is argued that societies that have low uncertainty avoidance tend to be more successful in LD because the elements of transformational leadership they adopt such as shared decision-making and confidence in the abilities of organisational members, motivate the implementation of LD activities (Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2003b; Dvir *et al*, 2002). However, the complexity surrounding uncertainty avoidance suggests that LD interventions should be implemented in terms of a country-by-country basis. Hofstede (2001) shows that the United States has low uncertainty avoidance that refers to willingness to take risks, while country, such as Japan and Greece have high uncertainty avoidance. Hofstede argues that there is no explanation for differences in uncertainty avoidance when countries have high uncertainty avoidance. For example, Greece hosted Olympic Games of 2004, so this emerged willingness to take risk similar to the USA culture; but Hofstede (2001) noted that the Games showed low uncertainty avoidance of Greece society.

Future orientation

This dimension refers to the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviours such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification (House et al, 1999). Hofstede (2001) suggests that individuals working settings with long-term orientation emphasize the development of social relationships, draw high level of satisfaction from daily human relations, and link between family and business issues; while individuals in companies with short-term orientation often emphasis the short-term results, draw less satisfaction from daily human relations, and separate between family and business issues.

Some research argues that there is an influential relationship between future orientation and the various leadership behaviours including: decision-making (Haegerman *et al*, 2010), visioning, strategic direction and planning (Dastmalchian *et al*, 2001), entrepreneurship (Frank, *et al*, 2010), and corruption (Seleim and Bontis, 2009). Other research shows that there is also an influential relationship between this dimension and HRM practices including: recruitment, selection, training and development, rewards system, retention strategies, and communication (Papalexandris and Panayotopoulou, 2004; Yeganeh and Su, 2008).

Research on future orientation dimension and LD practices attest to the high value that people put upon long-term training and development. In this regard, Zwikael (2008) states that because of high future orientation of Japanese organizations, top management is investing in project management training because most project managers rely on a strong technical background with little training in general management or project management. Zwikael, therefore, claims that Japanese project managers mainly make their decisions with emphasis of what can support them in the long term.

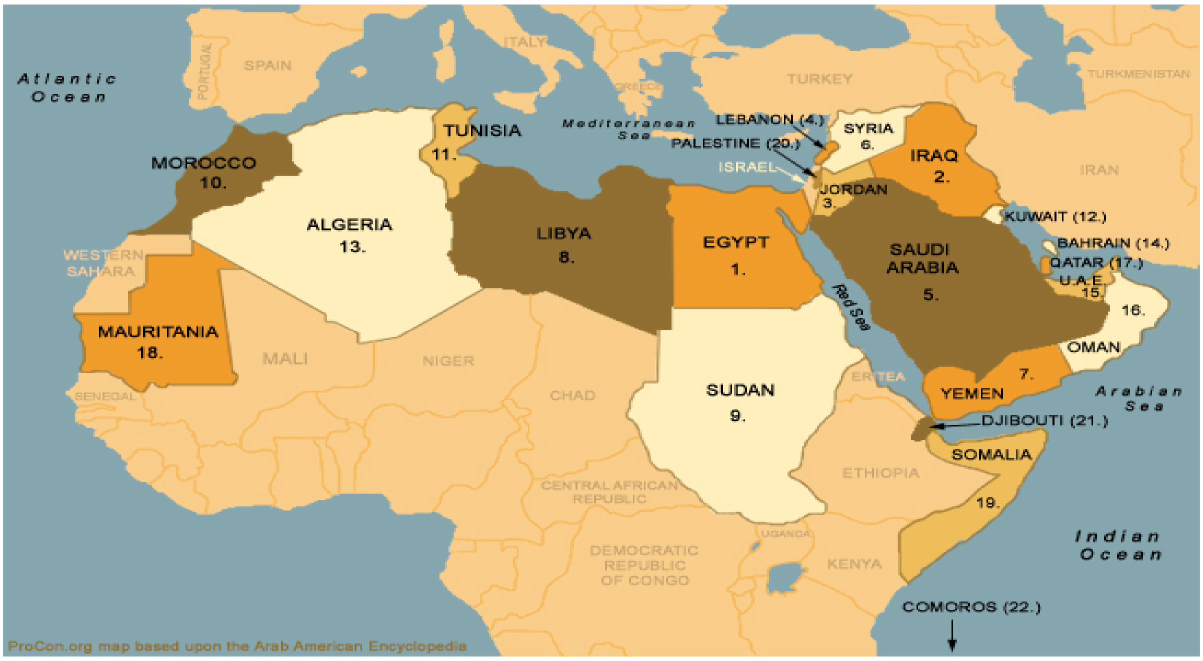
Accordingly, cultural dimensions seem to have a very strong impact on the application of LD across different countries (Ardichvili and Kuchinke, 2002; Schneider and Barsoux, 2003). This carries the need for exploring the national culture factors influencing LD on country-specific basis. Previous research that explored the influence of different national cultures values on understanding leadership attitudes in Lithuania, Estonia, and Poland reveal that the differences amongst these three countries help to enhance understanding of their differences in management practices and attitudes (Mockaitis, 2005).

Similarly, Mellahi (2000) examines the concept of leadership in Arab, Asian and Anglo-Saxon traditional cultural values. He challenged the compatibility of leadership values, such as empowerment, delegation and sharing power because they are core dimensions of current western leadership rhetoric run counter to the acceptance of authority in Arab, African and Asian cultures leaders. The findings carry important implications for the content and methods of LD because the evidence of this research points to the limitations of applicability and transference of western leadership rhetoric to other cultures.

This suggests that there needs for exploring the national culture on country-specific basis, acting as a critical issue for understanding its impacts on the application of LD.

2.8. THE ARAB CONTEXT

Figure: 2.1 The Arab World in the Middle East/North Africa



2.8.1. Leadership in the Arab Context

Leadership is a complex phenomenon in Arab context and have been discussed, tested and contradicted with other clusters. In this vein, leadership has been investigated in three ways: Westernized, Arabized, and Islamicized (Ali, 1990). Some studies discussed and examined western leadership theories in Arab world in order to build sound management theory. For example, Abdalla and Al-Homoud (2001) attempt to explore the leadership theory in the

Arab world, they indicate that the paradoxes of the Arab culture reflected by their findings expose the dilemma of the Arabs that is echoed in their need for both change and stability. Additionally, the dual sets of values held by Arabs make it difficult to develop reliable management theories. Similarly, Common (2011) intends to provide a basis for how leadership may be developed and adapted in the Arab Gulf region in particular and in diverse managerial environments in general to understand about the applicability of the concept of leadership in this context. He claims that no surprise to anyone who is familiar with the Middle East in general is such that it is difficult to conceptualize leadership as developed by theorists and practitioners in the United States, where the bulk of popular leadership theory is derived. It is argued that Western leadership theories emphasis shared leadership and management relation to transformation leadership behaviour (Alimo-Metcalfe & Alban-Metcalfe, 2004), but Plummer (2005) claims that the application of these theories in countries such Arab world is difficult because Arabs do not work in teams and employees showing leadership are targets for disapproval.

However, Yousef (2000) argues that leadership theories developed and tested in Western organisations are still valid for non-Western countries included Arab world, and contradicted other opinions claiming that autocratic leadership behaviour is the common behaviour in Arab world (Jar-Allah, 2000; Al-Hajjeh, 1984; Abdel-Rahman, 1994; El-Tayeb, 1986), and found that participative leadership behaviour is prevalent in Arab countries, as perceived by employees.

Other studies classified leadership in an Arabized group in order to investigate this phenomenon. This included analyses of managerial practices and concepts in Arab world. Dwairy *et al*, (2006) analyzed parenting leadership style in different Arab societies, and the results revealed that all parenting leadership styles differed across Arab societies. Cluster analysis revealed three combined parenting patterns: inconsistent, controlling and flexible. Empirical research examined how leaders handle routine events within their span and control in four Arab nations conducted by (Smith et al, 2007). The findings revealed that there is substantial diversity in managerial style within Arab nations because demographics reasons and suggested to gain understanding of the reasons for the specific expressions of increased modernity that were found, examining specific-context is required.

Others go further and investigate the influence of tribal and family system on the conceptions of leadership in Arab world (Ali, 1989; Weir, 2000). For example, Weir (2000) highlights the traditional role of Sheikh or of Mukhtar, who are the male chiefs at central life of Arab society; and notes that their role can provide insight into forms of Arabian leadership and its characteristics. In this system, Finlay et al (2003) note that political power is embodied in the sheik; while subordinates' power is shaped by their place within the family and friends networks; and this system is based on politicized relationship.

However, the argument is that leadership may not be generalised to all Arab countries regardless of the modernity of traditional authority of leadership because the tribal system of "sheikocracy" does not exist in all Arab countries. Also, Mukhtar today has nothing to do with authority; rather Mukhtar is perceived acting as only an employee. This may suggest that the traditional and modern authority of Arab leadership may change *its characteristics over times*.

According to Hutchings and Weir, (2006), Wasta is perceived as an integral feature of such kinds of authority in Arab world rooted in family and kinship ties and implicating the exercise of power and influence through social and politico-business networks, and thus Wasta tends to be used in place of a system of international business regulations and organisational leadership in Arab world (Weir, 2000). In this regard, Wasta can define leadership in social and political-business networks as an individualised characteristic in Arab world, which is the real form of Arab leadership.

In this regard, the role of women in leadership has been examined as an integral feature of authority in Arab world. It is noted that women leaders throughout Arab history rise to power by leveraging family, personal, and marriage relationships (e.g. Guthrie, 2001; Joseph, 2001; Mernissi, 1997). However, although women who rose to power in Arab leadership were mainly seen as iron and celebrated women, there have been a set of factors as being behind women manager's success or failure in Arab world: family support from their parents and spouse, the desire for success, education opportunities, self-confidence, diligence and perseverance, job opportunities and career development (Al-Lamki, 1999).

Weir argues that the Arab leadership approach is so significant and distinctive, that it represents a fourth paradigm of managerial practice on a par with the other three paradigms: Anglo-American, European and Japanese (Weir, 1998: 2003: 2004). However, the Arab world, even before what is called the Arab Spring is perceived as highly volatile, so investigating a new Arab paradigm may not provide the information required in the current situation in Arab world. This point has been supported by Al-Rasheed (1994) who argues that new paradigms and non-empirical models of management practices and organisation system are equally as subject to criticism as older models.

In addition to the above, other studies investigated and classified leadership into an Islamicized group to draw more understanding on this phenomenon in Arab world. The Islamic principles have been used in conducting business affairs. According to (Abdalla and Al-Homoud, (2001:509), in the earlier Islamic era, the Islamic theory of leadership has been based on the social philosophy of the Islamic system. This theory is based on the principles of hierarchical organisational structure, consultations among employees, obedience to authority, job description for roles and training. More specifically, Abuznaid (1994) highlights the Islamic values, namely, the Five Pillars of Islam related to management practice that contain the structural foundations of the ethical basis of all behaviour for a believer including the beliefs and practices of management and business life. They consist of the Testimony of Faith, the Prayer, the Zakat, the Fasting, and the Hajj. For example, Hunt and At-Twaijri (1996) reported that Saudi executive values are derived from Islamic work ethics, and show tendency toward individualism. Dwairi (2004) notes that that Islamic principles guide Arab managers and dictate what they allowed to do or not allowed to do. This suggests that Islamic rules impede adapting to changes. Hofstede (1991) argues that a traditionalised form of Muslim culture limits the ability of Arabs to adapt to a rapidly changing world.

2.8.2. Current Trends in Leadership Development

According to above discussion of how leadership is perceived in Arab context, it can be stated that applying LD in Arab context through global developmental assignments “Western cultural perspective” requires taking into account the sensitive issues, such as family, Islam, family business and colonialism; these issues have shaped Arabic business into what it is today and help explain how Arab leaders develop as leaders (Weir, 2010).

Although attempts have been made in the academic field on some themes and problems around LD in Arab context, more attention is required for pursuing LD as appropriate for the size of Western investments in this area of the world. In this regard, it is noted that the current trends in LD focus on developing leaders skills that serve the companies requirements and this attention is mostly perceived in for-profit companies, regardless of their nationalities.

One of the early studies that addressed management development in Arab world was by Al-Faleh (1987:20) who explored the influence of culture on management development in

Jordan. He noted a set of points about Arab management that include: the authoritarian management style is predominant, decision-making is constantly pushed upwards in the organisation and management is reactive and crisis-oriented, Arab manager run their organisations as family unit and assume a paternalistic role on them, managers' behaviour is greatly influenced by cultural values and historical background. Accordingly, Al-Faleh (1987) suggests that the previous notes determine the effectiveness of development programmes when transferring Western training and development to Arab world.

Empirical research conducted a survey of management training and development practices. This included needs assessment, programmes and participants' selection, programme evaluation and future trends in large Kuwaiti organizations. The study's findings indicated that systematic needs assessments and programme evaluation are sorely lacking in these organizations (Abdalla and Al-Homoud, 1995).

Another study highlighted management development and leadership in the Middle East conducted by Weir (2003) who discussed the form of leadership style in Arab world, and suggested Arab paradigm of leadership style. He notes that managers' styles are influenced by the ethical ambiguities regarding the practices of Wasta, and it is translated as the exercise of power, influence and information-exchange via social and politico-business networks.

Empirical research by Wilkins (2001) addressed the outcome of Western management development programme transferred by English language to Arab Gulf countries. The study findings revealed that there are some misunderstandings and conflicts between trainer and trainees if the trainer does not act in the way expected by trainees. This study suggested that cross-cultural training should be given to all expatriate trainers not suitably familiar with the local culture, customs and traditions in Arab Gulf countries. Similarly, Analoui (2002) argues that management commitment represents the essence for the success of development attempts and claims that Western management development programme should respect organisational culture, strategies, policies and management practices in order to ensure achieving results required. This is supported by Al-Madhoun (2002) who notes that management development programmes offered by management centres are translated to suit local needs but this poses a real problem for managers because there is a difficulty to explain about imported resources having little relevance to their positions.

Weir (2010:206) goes further and argues that the failure of Western LD programme in Arab world is that it is heavily steeped in Western thinking and approaches for three reasons: 18 of the top 20 executive education programmes are in the West, all but 5 of the top 100 MBA programmes are also in the West, and every one of the top-selling leadership books is written by a Western researcher.

Atiyyah (1993) assessed the future trends of management development in Arab countries in 90s, and linked between the development of political, economic, and organisational fields from one side and the need and demand for management development from the other side in Arab countries. He argued that local companies must seek to expand and improve their services to increase the need for management development.

2.9. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The literature review highlights an assumed model of LD that can be examined in different contexts, a model which adequately represents the body of research on the area of LD, namely, leadership behaviours/capabilities, LD methods, identifying leadership needs for development, and contextual influences. Yet, as previously discussed in the literature review, previous research of LD do offer contrasting views and results as to how LD occurs.

The following can be offered as a series of theoretical propositions capable of being implemented within a set of steps in the area of LD. Each represents a rational explanation to ultimately constitute a big picture of LD experience.

Leadership Behaviours-Capabilities

According to this view, LD experience will rely upon selecting and developing a set of the behaviours and capabilities required, which are categorized under three common clusters, namely: big picture of environment, inter-organisational representation, and leading the change (Storey, 2004) for meeting individuals' needs, jobs needs and company environment. The improvement of leadership relies upon the accuracy of the requirements of the individuals, jobs, and company. In this perspective, LD occurs by the ability of participants to build their experience by learning from the requirements.

Leadership Development Methods

Although the components of LD interventions are built on the US model, there is no a convergent purpose of using each LD methods and activities across different countries. In this perspective, it provides with an opportunity for understanding why specific LD method or activity is successful more than others to develop specific leadership behaviours/capabilities from one side, and understanding the contents LD methods and activities in the non-Western contexts.

Identifying Leadership Needs for Development

Identifying leadership potential for development depend on analyzing internal/external environment by using feedback method as a means to ensure an understanding of leadership needs in the light of the weaknesses. In this perspective, focusing on analysing stakeholders' feedback, analysing business environment in which a company works tends to be universal tactic and tool for identifying leadership needs for development.

Contextual Influences

The final result of this research is to suggest a set of factors that accompany with LD, which companies to consider if LD is to be successfully implemented, with taking into consideration the institutional and cultural characteristics in the country in which they work.

These four perspectives offer a solid, theoretical basis for further investigation in the area and have contributed to formulating the following research questions:

RQ1 Why is leadership development pursued in Syrian-Arab context?

RQ2: How are Western leadership development ideas applied in the Syrian-Arab context?

RQ3: What are the factors that influenced this leadership development?

The answers to those questions help to reinforce the building of leadership development model in Arab contexts.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the rationale and nature of the present study's methodology are discussed. Initially, the research philosophy with an outline of research paradigms by comparison with the selected one; a justification for interpretivism research paradigm adopted for this research; a justification for case study methodology; the quality of case study research design; judging the quality of case study methodology; discussion on selecting multiple case studies with holistic design followed by indication the literal and theoretical replication; discussion on data collection procedures included several other topics: case study protocol; selection criteria of research country; selection criteria of for-profit sector; selection criteria of interviewees; and data collection, which is divided into two parts: semi-structured interviews and document analysis. This is followed by data analysis and then the limitation for case study, and followed by ethical consideration in this research.

3.2. JUSTIFICATION FOR INTERPRETIVISM PARADIGM

The epistemological position of this study is interpretivism. This paradigm is derived from phenomenology that refers to the way in which humans make sense of the surrounding world and is concerned with the lived experience of people. In this regard, "access to the participant's experience depends on, and is complicated by, the researcher's own conceptions, and these processes are necessary in order to make sense of that other personal world through a process of interpretative activity" (Smith and Eatough, 2006:324). Interpretivism paradigm fits this research because the process of research needs engagement with for-profit sector stakeholders to collect in-depth qualitative data from which interpretations are presented. This research, also, adopts interpretivism paradigm because it emphasises that learning about leaders cannot rely on objective measurement instruments which is utilised in the same standardised manner from individual to individual; instead, the best way for learning about individual leader needs flexibility and also subjectivity because the subject's world can be observed by the subject's own eyes (Rubin and Babbie, 2009; Babbie, 2008). Thus, this paradigm allows the researcher further understanding of the reality of LD because it is interpreted by involved leaders in these three companies in Syria.

3.3. JUSTIFICATION FOR CASE STUDY

Case study strategy is defined as a "detailed investigation, often with data collected over a period of time, of one or more organisations, or groups with organisations, with a view to providing an analysis of context and processes involved in the phenomenon under investigation" (Hartley, 1994:208). The evidences from adopting case study are in that it examines a contemporary phenomenon, which is LD within its real-life context, which is business organisations in Syria; also, the boundaries between business organisations in Syria and LD are not clearly evident. This research study utilises multiple sources of information including findings from pilot test, face-to-face interviews, and documents; thus this allows to further rigour via triangulation. The inductive and explorative-descriptive characteristics of this case study methodology are appropriate for what is needed to be under investigates building (Yin, 2009; Eisenhardt, 1989; Robson, 2002; Gilmore and Carson, 1996). Furthermore, this case study adopts how/why/what questions, acting as exploratory case study. Accordingly, a case study strategy is justified for this research. Multiple source of evidence in case study design can be collected to answer research questions, where every source of data has strengths and weaknesses (Patton, 2002). Yin (2009) suggests six primary sources of evidence adopted in case study: interview, archival records, documentation, physical artefacts, participant observation, and direct observation.

3.4. MULTIPLE-CASE STUDIES WITH HOLISTIC DESIGN

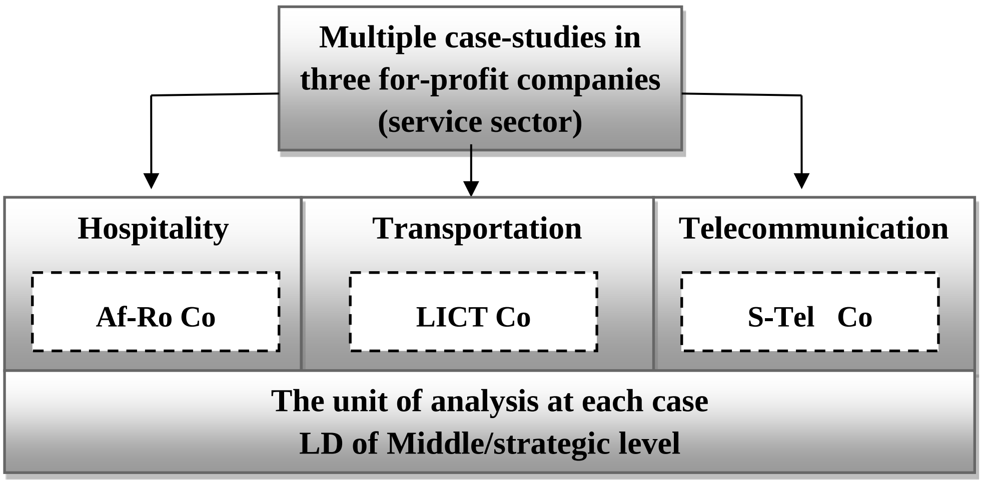
Case study is either single or multiple case studies (Yin, 2009). Choosing a multiple case studies design for my research has several advantages. In this regard, analytic conclusions independently arising from the three cases, as with three experiments, tend to be much more powerful than arising from a single case study (Yin, 2003a). Additionally, the evidence from multiple cases is included, the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation tends to be (Miles and Huberman, 1994), and the research study is regarded as being more robust (Herriott and Firestone, 1983). This design allows cross-case analysis more investigation of the searched phenomenon in diverse settings and from multiple experiments (Yin 2009). Another advantage of adopting multiple-case study is based on using multiple sources in data gathering. There is no single source that has complete advantage over the others. The sources used for these multiple-case studies are complementary (Yin, 2003a, 2009).

Although three companies selected for this research have witnessed a clear increase in the demands for local and foreign experts and developmental programmes for managerial leadership (Mehchy and Doko, 2010), I conducted multiple-case studies with holistic design because of their different characteristics and their different application of HRD, particularly LD.

I, therefore, believed that adopting multiple-case studies through these three companies would have a more in-depth approach to LD than other companies; even those in state sector. Furthermore, each company of these three companies tend to be different from its counterparts in the same sector because of their good reputation and competition of regional companies (figure 3.2).

In the light of the competition, each company from these three companies provides its people all the needs for success, which are not available in other companies in the same sector as well as their different contributions in HR development into the Syrian society within, and beyond the state sector.

Figure 3.1: Research Design for Multiple Case Studies Research



Adopting multiple-case studies is based on the fact that each case study must be carefully selected because it tends to be either predicting similar results, which is a literal replication or producing contrasting results, which is theoretical replication (Yin, 2009). For these multiple-case studies, if the findings across the cases are similar, it can be stated that replication has occurred because the more replications, the more strong results the research has. The context of the three cases is different in terms of company types, such as domestic, international and multinational; or their business types: transportation, hospitality and telecommunication. These cases are selected because they offer rich data about their contrasting situations. If the findings of the cases once analysed support the hypothesized contrast, the results represent the real application of theoretical replication (Yin, 2003a).

Furthermore, the data within cases will be analysed across cases by comparing the major themes and patterns to identify the similarities/differences and compare them with the literature, so this will lead to a synthesis findings by presenting emerging themes, which will ensure the replication. The results will be reported in terms of a within-case analysis followed by a cross-case analysis (chapters 4, 5, 6, 7).

3.5. The Quality of Case Study Methodology

Qualitative case study is based on trustworthiness and authenticity to demonstrate the findings (Klenke, 2008; Carson *et al*, 2001). There are four tests of trustworthy qualitative case study are credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Curtin and Fossey, 2007). Grinnell and Untau (2010) and Carson (2001) and Miles and Huberman (1994) outline criteria for quality tests presented by Lincoln and Guba, (1985) and Yin (2003a, 2009) that are common in all social science methods. These tests help summarise the methods adopted to meet the criteria for judging trustworthy in this case study research.

Credibility test often asks to answer whether findings can be regarded as truthful. For this study, credibility was ensured through providing a thickness of description of each company context, which can have impact of the adequacy of evidence (Marshall and Rossman, 2011) through surrounding the way of how LD is applied. This study uses two types of triangulation: data triangulation, which involved the use of multiple data sources that included the participants and academic staff; and methodology triangulation, which involved the use of semi-structure in depth interviews and documents (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). In other words, I used triangulation of data source, which include: justification of adopting qualitative case study, pilot test, and documents, providing assessment of appropriate literature, evaluating the finding and conclusions with academic staff and an external check; and interpretations with the sources (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Grinnell and Untau, 2010). Therefore, this case study used semi-structure in depth interviews, documents, and reviewing the findings with others for ensuring sufficient triangulation of data and supporting my confidence in data.

The triangulation for this study was based on three cases from three different companies' contexts, which may provide very good understanding of how LD is applied because the triangulation of different approaches can make it possible to capture different aspects of the leadership development, such as professional activities, knowledge of one's own modes of action and routines (Flick, 2004). So this reinforces the rigor by completing the data via adding other methods because this is like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that provide a full image of LD phenomenon by putting together (Erzberger and Kelle, 2003:461). This allowed me to put together different pieces of picture to draw one completed image supporting the phenomenon; consequently, credibility was achieved for this study.

Transferability is introduced as qualitative equivalent of external validity because both concepts are similar in terms of their process in determining whether results may be extrapolated beyond the particular context of research (Teddie and Tashakkori, 2003). It is defined as "the degree to which the finding of a qualitative study can be applied or generalised to other context or other group" (Ary *et al*, 2009:501).Transferability test meets the external validity in quantitative research that refers to generalizability of results. According to Kelle *et al*, (1995), qualitative approaches share a basic methodological claim that they are concerned with generating new insight or developing new theoretical concepts rather than testing propositions rooted from existing theoretical theories. So I intend to gain meaning and in-depth understanding of phenomena that cannot be achieved by statistical generalizability (Carson et al, 2001); particularly this study does not intend to test theory.

However, the findings of this study may be possible to be transferable by providing thick description of my research process that help the readers determine whether the findings of my study could be applied to different settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Curtin and Fossey, 2007). In theory building research, there has been concern for the issue of generalizability in qualitative research. So this study attempts to contribute to existing theory for the phenomenon of LD, which is under investigation. This occurs through the analytical generalisation (Yin, 2003a; Smaling, 2003). Thus, this supposes the findings of my case study research contribute to an existing theoretical description (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Consequently, transferability was achieved by adopting multiple-case study with holistic design and using existing developed theory about LD, which enabled me to compare the findings of three cases. When I note that there is more than one case support the same theory, it can be stated that replication occurs (Yin, 2009). In this regard, Miles and Huberman (1994:29) claim that with multiple-case studies, the issue of generalisation does not change, so I generalised from case to another on the basis of a match to the underlying theory rather than a large universe, and selected the three cases on the basis of conceptual grounds rather than representative ground.

Dependability test is similar to positivism research of reliability that deals with the consistency of findings. Improving dependability is when investigators provide an audit trail of data collection procedures, use participants and colleagues checks of the drawn conclusion, and coding checks that can be divided into two types of coding (Grinnell and Untau, 2010); the first type is inter-coder reliability that refers to the extent to which coding providing similar findings when the same text is coded by other coders (Neuendorf, 2002). However, conflicting in coding is often caused because of the difference amongst coders themselves; thus this raises the need to experienced coders for coding (Bryman, 2007). The second type is intra-coder reliability that refers to the extent to which coding is able to provide similar finding when repeating trails over time (Roth, 2005). This multiple-case studies research has achieved dependability test through data triangulation, caring in recording data, data collection, and analysis; and recording of data has been simultaneously; and constructing data analysis carefully amongst the rich data for choosing the relative ideas.

Confirmability refers to ability to ensure that the investigation was accomplished similar to how the investigator describes it (Miles and Huberman, 1994). For this study, I developed a record of data collection including interview notes, transcriptions to allow other investigators to pursue the chain of evidence; thus it can help readers to observe the thought process of the investigator. In addition, tracking investigators' bias by indicating how subjectivity was supplemented by other confirmability, such as triangulation of observers, member checks, consulting with colleagues where using an audit process by others allow confirmability the results; this may include the key informants to review draft case study report findings compared with their experience over the interview (Yin, 2009; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Grinnell and Untau, 2010). Consequently, I achieved this test because of being the sole researcher. My case study research was closely and regularly supervised by my tutor who audited the decision points throughout the process including coding process, and discussed the suggestions and interpretation of data with me.

3.5. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

This section begins with presenting case study protocol and interview protocol and its application in this study followed by selection for research country then selection criteria for

for-profit sector and selection criteria for the interviewee. After that data collection for this case study research is presented.

3.5.1. Case Study Protocol

A significant aspect of the research design involves developing case study protocol that contains the procedures and instruments in conducting case study (Ellinger *et al*, 2009). Case study allows the investigator to increase reliability of case study as it is as a guideline for the inquiry and consistency in multiple case study research (Yin, 2009). The common components that should be included in the case study protocol summarised by Yin (2003a, 2009) are:

- An overview of the case study project, objectives, relevant reading, literature, issues.
- Field procedures, access to field sites, sources of information, procedural reminders.
- Case study questions which are the core of protocol reflecting the actual inquiry include specific questions that investigator uses for collecting data.
- A guide for the case study report including an outline, format for the presentation of data, specific bibliography and relevant documents to the study.

In relation to the interview protocol, I began with an introductory page for participants, which introduces the research aim and objectives briefly followed by my request for taking part in the interview in order to collect detailed information about LD. The use of interview protocol in this study is important due to its role in contributing to reliability and constructing validity. Field procedures used in this study have been summarised in different parts of this section. Also, case study questions considered for this study are raised from the purpose of this study.

3.5.2. Selection Criteria of the Research Country

The Syrian Arab Republic with a population of over 23 million spreads over 185,180 square kilometres and is at the heart of the world (Syria-Centric Worldview).

Figure 3.2: Geographical Location of Syria

Economic Environment

Although the Arab countries have much in common, such as language, political status, and culture, it is not surprised that there are various amongst these countries in terms of economic development.

Little research considered Syria individually regarding its economic development, so available research and reports that consider Syria as a part of Arab world indicate that the economic development in this part of the world still faces some barriers and false signposts. According to (Jreisat, 2006), Arab governments have spent little effort for building a civil society as Arab governments defaulted on solving any of basic societal problems represented by gender identity, unemployment, violence, poverty. Besides, unstable political environment represents an important challenge in the Arab world. Furthermore, the trend of capital, in Arab oil-producing countries, goes toward construction of huge buildings, consumption, buying weapons, and establishing projects that mostly serve few people in authority. These challenges continue to delay any developmental efforts in the Arab world.

OBG (2008) highlight the change in the business mentality in Syrian context since the 2000s. Syria has witnessed clear changes in its legal environment, which includes the liberalisation of the business environment and trade; Syrian economic environment has been changed from socialist economy to social market economy. Additionally, Syria is implementing significant changes to build the base of business environment for investments through new legislation laws that allowed foreign and local investors to establish their own business, such as steel, cement, phosphate, and electricity transformers, manufacturing cares. These procedures have increased the competitiveness of Syrian products by trade liberalisation in the global market (OBG, 2009, 2010). Although the foreign and local investments have witnessed a notable increase, the infrastructure of investments appears to require radical improvements and changes including: trade policies, governmental regulations, liberalization, bureaucracy, transparency, and banking system (Hakimian and Moshaaver, 2001).

Social Environment

The socio-cultural environments of the Arab World influenced international business operating in Syria. Different factors played a significant role in shaping socio-cultural environments surrounding companies operating in Syria. Weir (2010) asserts that nationality in Arab world is defined by faith and honour that differ from Western cultures or cluster. Thus Syria culture as a part of an Arab world (United Nations, 2008) is considered under assumptions about regional culture. Syria is more ethnically diverse with different originating classified as ninety percent of Syrians are of Arab ethnicity; nine percent are Kurdish, with Circassians, Turkomans, and Armenians filling out the mix (Leverett, 2005).

Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are the key religions. Islam is the official religion in Syria (Kabaskal and Bodur, 2002), but includes several sects, which are Sunni, Alawi, Shiite, and Druze; and Christians include Armenian, Assyrian, Syriac, Greek Orthodox, Protestant, the Latin, and Catholic (Pipes, 1993). As Syria contains probably the most fractured population in the world, it is characterised as secular country and Islam does not play a strong role in people's life (Al-Khatib, *et al*, 2005), despite of being the dominant religion.

Syrians like other Arab people tend to conform to their customs and each person belong to an in-group, where Arabs live in harmony with the group that belong to (Piggott, 2005). For example, family is very important factor into Arab society, where each family member can reflect the success or failure for the whole family (Barakat, 1993). Weir (2010) asserts that the influence of family in Arab society is great, and influence of how people lead and what behaviour they have. This is likely to be due to a patriarchal society and family focused.

Gender occupies a high level of importance in Arab countries, but this issue tends to be different in some Arab secular countries. For instance, gender equality can be observed in all aspects of life in Syria. Although some constitution rules are rooted from Islamic law, women enjoy equal civil liberty as men, and have right to live and work acting as independent being. Also, all the constitutions, including the current constitution serve to ensure equality between the testimony of women and men (Maktabi, 2010), regardless of some Islamic rules in the country's constitution.

Education system in Syria is characterised as free education to all Syrians from the primary to higher education levels, where educational curriculum focuses on sciences, and thus this system has churned out well trained engineers, doctors and specialists, lawyers, teachers despite of the fact that most educated people leave the countries for better opportunities (OBG, 2010). Education system imposes on all Syrians to learn until secondary school; and elementary school is divided into five kinds of school: 1) scientific and literature schools, which allow their students to continue in universities; 2) manufacture schools; 3) trading schools, 4) agriculture schools; 5) tourism schools. The number of universities across public and private sectors has increased from 4 to 15 universities between 2000 and 2010 divided into three levels: Bachelor, Masters, and doctoral degree. Public universities delegate yearly almost 3000 students for studying abroad classified as distinctive students (OBG, 2010).

Although most improvements regarding equality, human development index, and literacy levels have seen since the Ba'ath Party controlled the country, for-profit sector has the major role in economy and development as a partner with, and beyond the government (AHDR, 2003). However, Syria still has a long way to go to recuperate from its economic, political and social challenges through the Western sanctions; particularly, after the "Arab Spring", which influenced HRD, and destroyed most positive aspects that were previously achieved by the Ba'ath Party.

LD is accompanied with business companies working in Syria after the change from socialist economy to social market economy (OBG, 2010; Tabler, 2011). Syria has been implementing significant change for increasing investments by improving financial and banking system, trade policies, and economic liberalization (OBG, 2008). This has reinforced the position of Syria as a research country for academic and investors around the world (Federal Research Division, 2004).

3.5.3. Selection Criteria for For-Profit Sector Setting

For-profit sector is a new trend in Syria, particularly since the 2000s, resulting in attracting more foreign companies and increasing the demand for foreign experts and LDPs in for-profit organisations (Mehchy and Doko, 2010). For-profit sector has been a means of helping speed economic growth and social well-being in Arab world (Heller and Schiller, 1993). In Syria, for-profit sector is somewhat similar to government sector in terms of size with some difference in standards in terms of selecting their employees and training and development methods. The ownerships of for-profit sector vary between local, international and multinational (OBG, 2011).

Table 3.1: Profiles of the case-study companies and interviewees

Characteristics	S-Tel	Af-Ro	LICT
Core Business	Telecommunication	Hospitality	Transportation
Capital	National	National/international	National/MNC
Managers	Local	Local/Arab	Local/Arab/Foreign
Market	National	Local/International	Local/ Global
Number of employees	2000	H/400* - L/200*	700
Number of managers	27 middle-top managers (150*)	14 middle-top managers	22 middle-top managers
Experts	Local	Local/Arab	Local/Arab/Foreign
Source of training	Western	Western	Western
*H= High season *L= low season *150 managers are the total managers across the three managerial levels			

Selecting three companies in service sector, namely, S-Tel, Af-Ro and LICT was based on a set of criteria summarised as the follow:

1. Although the numbers of employees were different among these companies and the numbers of managers were different between Af-Ro and LICT from one side and S-Tel from the other side, the three companies were classified as large companies, and thus they were seen as a means to represent sample of for-profit organisations.

2. These companies targeted different market and their employees, managers and experts were different between local, local/Arab, and local/Arab/Foreign. This helped to provide rich information about these different companies adopting differentiation strategy.

3. Although the core business of these three companies was different, they were one of the few leading companies in the service sector, which were still operating in Syrian market between 2011 and 2012 over data collection.

4. Selecting these companies was based on reasons such size, their different contributions to Syrian society, profile, growth because for-profit companies reflect the pioneer sectors working in Syria, and thus their contribution in increasing the rate of employments and training and development in Syria (OBG, 2011).

5. The lack of academic research and case studies regarding this sector snowballing in the last decade.

3.5.4. Selection Criteria for Interviewees

The participants were selected according to their involvement level with LD, but for this study, I conducted my interviews within strategic and middle management level that include the following positions. *At LICT*, Deputy Chief Operation Manager, HR manager, Maintenance and repair assistant manager, Finance manager, IT assistant manager, Procurement manager, the maintenance and repair manager, Finance assistant manager, Chief Operation Officer, Business Control & Internal Audit Manager, Engineering Procurement, and Terminal Facilities Manager. *At Afamia-Rotana*, Chairman of Afamia-R, Food and beverage manager, HR manager, Leisure manager, Employees development, Marketing manager, Reception Manager, IT manager, Finance manager, HR assistance, General relation manage, security manager. *At S-Tel*, HR manage, financial manager, Procurement manager, Sales manager, managing and governance relationship unit, information systems manager, technical manager, administration manager, Planning unit, marketing manager, customers service manager, quality manager.

These levels were selected to be involved in my study due to their ability to provide important perspectives, data and richer picture about their company regarding LD, and these levels were seen as a source of significant challenges facing their development (Hesselbein and Shinseki, 2004; Palus and Horth, 2004); particularly, those levels can provide evidence based on their experience and work in practice and training and development.

3.5.5. Data Collection

Data gathering was conducted twice for my research. In the first time, five interviews were conducted from four companies, but the second time I gathered my data from a further three companies still working in Syrian market and having the same characteristics that meet my research requirements. The first trip to Syria was between November and December, 2011. In this journey, five interviews were collected. Three interviews were pilot studies, which represent three companies that have different characteristics. This helped me refine data collection plans, with taking into an account both the content of the data to be collected and the procedures to be followed in collecting the data. Some of companies refused to participate for security reasons and others withdrew from Syrian market, so I went back to the UK to re-manage other appointments with other companies. As a result, I found that the best way to get access to informants would be through using my own relationships with several senior officials in Syria who had good access to the companies wanted. In the next journey to Syria, the criteria for selecting the companies were based on the following procedures:

- The company should be categorised under for-profit sector.
- The size of the selected companies for this research was large.

Table 3.2 Interviews Characteristics

Company name	Interviews' Location	Number
Syriatel	Office	(none) Recorded
		(12) Not Recorded
Afamia-Rotana		(9) Recorded
		(3) Not Recorded
LICT		(10) Recorded
		(2) Not Recorded
Total recorded interviews		(19) Recorded
Total not recorded interviews		(17) Not Recorded

The next journey to Syria was between 26 July and 24 December 2012 that was a long time to collect data from my home country because I was kidnapped while I was collecting my data, near to Damascus by an armed group, which demanded ransom for the release. So I decided to adopt other companies for the following reasons:

1) Companies that had participated in my study in the first journey to Syria transferred their business to other countries or closed down because of sanctions, or did not have enough staff to continue their participants.
2) The difficulties to reach participants especially going to Damascus from my home city, which is Latakia has been dangerous because this has required going across

> Homs city, which is another dangerous city, so the only way was supposed to use to arrive my destination was by Latakia airport, but the distance between Damascus airport and the central zone of Damascus city is long. I have been detained in this area.

Accordingly, I wanted sufficiency with conducting interviews only from one company in Damascus city, which is Syriatel, and adopted other two companies in Latakia city for security reason, which was my home city. I decided later to adopt only these three cases. Other three pilot studies were conducted in the three companies for ensuring that this step could help me refine the overall research design and develop relevant lines of questions. For example, after interviewing the first three participants, I revised my interview schedule after I was asked to give examples with each question, especially, the interview questions were theoretical; this was expected in the first journey to Syria in 2011.

The samples were conducted by diverse informants at strategic and middle management and data sources in different types of companies, so all informants were asked to assign a letter to confirm their agreement to participate. Transcribing and taping interviews in-details along with my personal comments, tended to be critical given the concerns about issues, such as the validity of participants as a data collection (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). I conducted 36 face-to-face interviews into three companies. However, it is worth to mention that 5 interviews were hand-written because 3 participants at Rotana-Afamia Hotel and 2 participants at LICT company refused audio recording for personal reasons, so I was given the choice to accept conducting the interviews without recording; otherwise they refuse to participate; while the other 12 interviews at Syriatel, which was a domestic company, the decision was made from the top management because the policy of this company did not allow it staff to involve in any recorded interviews with any side, even if the reason was for academic purposes. I explained and proved the reason of Syriatel to refuse any recorded interviews for two reasons:

1) Security reason because of Syria crisis as a way to protect their company members for being a target of the armed groups due to supporting the regime.
2) They reluctant to provide information through interviews because they have not accustomed to the qualitative kind of research.

The recorded interviews were not sent to the participants to read and verification, because of time constraints after I have been detained. Particularly, I transcribed the 19 recorded interviews after I went back the UK on 23/12/2012. It is argued that engaging participants to reflect further on their first interview to check details might be tied with ideas of truth and the validity of data (Forbat and Henderson, 2005). Therefore, 17 interviews which were hand-written were sent to the participants for verification to encourage participants to reflect on what had been said during the interviews and to give another opportunity to delete or change; although the final research findings were sent to three participants chosen by me to represent the three companies and by academic member-checking for the validity of the findings (Klenke, 2008).

3.5.6. Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviewing is characterised as one of the most common procedures to collect qualitative data. Interview has several advantages, but the most significant of which is questioning individuals who are not able to write their response. This type allows individuals to provide much more information by their oral responses than their written ones. Moreover, interview technique allows me to plan what I ask at different levels to collect richer information regarding the subject (Wood and Ross-Kerr, 2011).

Interview can be categorised into three types: structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. These types of interviews can have different forms: face-to-face interview, telephone interviews, or group interview (Saunders *et al*, 2009). Saunders and his colleagues indicate that there are different areas to consider when conducting semi-structured and in-depth research interviews: opening the interview; utilising a clear language; questioning; good listening; testing and outlining understanding; recognising and arranging with the different types of participants; and using recording data. Semi-structured in-depth interview may be an effective way for conducting interviews due to the flexibility of this method balanced by structure, and the quality of data obtained, so semi-structured interviewing is used when researchers know the questions required, but they are not able to predict the responses (Morse, 2012). In semi-structured interviews, the same questions are asked to all those involved, the kind of questions go through a process of the development to ensure their topic focus; interviewees are prompted by supplemented questions if they have not dealt spontaneously with one of the sub-areas of interest; approximately equivalent interview time is allowed in each case (Gillham, 2005:70), (Appendices A andC).

Consequently, I took into an account that I conducted only middle and top managers of all cases, those types of people did not enable to spend long time answering interview's questions, particularly the average of interviews lasted around one hour. To avoid the problem for presenting all questions, I followed what Fontana and Frey, (2005:697) state: “Asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task that it may seem at first. The spoken or written word has always a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions or how carefully we report or code the answers”.

It worth to mention that most participants were influenced by the political conflicts that altered to religious conflicts, regardless of the reasons or regional and international sides supporting the crisis. It is noted that most questions that have connection with religion or politic issues have either ignored or avoided by the participants, so the researcher attempted to use indirect questions regarding institutional context in order to get these questions answered.

3.5.7. Document

Document analysis was another common data source used in qualitative research. I tried to make balance between the triangulation methods, acting as a strategic procedure into qualitative case study because it is helpful to ask leaders to identify and reflect on a critical situations about their LD in their work, as Chadderton and Torrance, (2011:56) state it: “An important criticism is that reliance such methods, and especially on interviewing alone, can result in an overly empiricist analysis-locked into the here-and-now of participants' perceptions”.

So, I attempted to collect documents about the three companies to understand much more about the history and background of each company (Rowlinson, 2009). Yin (2009:103) states that the type of documentary information can take several forms, which are relevant to every case study topic: personal documents including letters and emails; written reports of events including agenda, announcements, minutes of meetings; formal studies about the same case, which are under investigation; news appearing in community newspaper or the mass media; all these forms of documents can be available through internet searches.

For this study, the documents source was adopted from minutes of meetings and downloaded from the companies’ websites that are involved in this multiple case study research. These documents included companies’ policies, demographic characteristics, business ethics, annual reports, HRD and investments’ reports as well as informal notes by informal conversations. In this regard, it should be noted that documents did not vary much among the three companies and few documents have mentioned to management training because such information has been confidential.

Although these documents offer valuable evidence to support information obtained by interviews, the concern is about whether documents sources guarantee accuracy, consistency or even objectivity (Merriam, 2009). In this regard, Atkinson and Coffey (2004:58) state that "documents are 'social facts', in that they are produced, shared and used in socially organized ways. They are not, however, transparent representations of organizational routines, decision-making processes or professional diagnoses. They construct particular kinds of representations within their own conventions". Similarly, Yin (2009:105) asserts that reviewing any document is to understand that it was written for some specific purpose and some specific audience. Accordingly, the role of researchers is to evaluate the relevant documents before selecting the evidence (Dul and Hak, 2012).

So I took into an account the risks that accompany with extracting documents to avoid failing into these bumps. This was through considering what Scott (1990) proposes four criteria for assessing the quality of the evidence available from documents: Authenticity, credibility, representativeness, and meaning. I achieved authenticity through ensuring that the contents of such documents are genuine and of unquestionable origin through comparing the documents' contents with the purposes are required to achieve and the purpose of publishing them. The documents collected were primary sources, which gave them legitimacy to be more trustworthy and reliability in order to support interviews' evidence for ensuring that there is matching between the intended meaning for the author of the documents, the meaning of the reader of it, and the social meaning for a person who is the object of that document in order to determine whether the evidence available in the documents are implemented in my research. However, for my multiple-case studies, I adopted the evidence available from secondary documents sources on the base of avoiding the negative aspects of using documents in my qualitative case study.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS OF QUALITAIVE RESEARCH

The process of analysis part of research embodies all ways by which data collection is conducted, such as interview transcripts, documents sources, reviewing the final finding report with three participants representing the key leaders. As this research adopts multiple case-studies, two stages of analysis were used in this study:

- *Within* each of the three cases to provide a rich understanding of the case and to help the unique patterns within each of these three cases in order to emerge; and
- *Across* the three cases to reveal the commonalities and unique features across cases to develop more complex interpretations (Yin, 2009; Saunders *et al*, 2009).

As the data were collected from the three companies separately, data collection, at first glance, seemed to be disorganised. The interviews and documents served to produce a great amount of text for each company separately. Attride-Sterling (2001) states it is very important that data is analysed in a methodical manner to yield meaningful results.

The systematic process of qualitative transcript-based data analysis followed a form of the iterative stage process outlined by Turner (1981) and similar to the stage process recommended by Bonoma (1985). This form of analysis serves to offer broad definitions and general boundaries of key constructs whilst identifying and evaluating linkages between such constructs. This process conducted by methods of inductive reasoning (Lincoln and Guba 1986) and comparative methods (Martin and Turner 1986). In this study, Miles and Huberman's (1994:4) framework for qualitative data analysis, which is "directed at tracing out lawful and stable relationships among social phenomena, based on the regularities and sequences that link these phenomena" is adopted. This framework of analysis includes three components or activities, interacting throughout the analysis: 1) data reduction; 2) data display, which represent the first and second-level of coding; 3) drawing and verifying conclusions, which represent interpreting data and theory building (e.g. Grinnell and Unrau, 2011; Miles and Huberman, 1994). As Tesch (1990) believes that hand-coding of data may lead to more data, data reduction is seen as a good alternative, this stage refers to "the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field notes, or transcriptions"(Miles and Huberman,1994:10). These three activities or stages are interrelated throughout the data analysis.

Data reduction and data display rest mostly on the operations of the coding and memoing, which are the two basic operations which get the analysis going (Punch, 2006). Coding is concrete activity that starts analysis process, which is the process of putting tags, names, or labels against pieces of the data for assigning units of meaning to descriptive information, and attached to chunks of words, sentences, phrases, or even whole paragraphs, related to a particular setting (Miles and Huberman, 1994:56). Data collection was arranged from simple to complex stages, which began with preparing data in transcript form and establishing a plan for analysis, I proceed through three levels, coding, pattern codes, and memoing.

The researcher used thematic coding, through creating coding list before any considering of data. This coding list as Ryan and Bernard (2003:276) say it “inductive coding”, was built from the conceptual framework of the study and its research questions (Attride-Sterling, 2001). However, the process of revising codes later was as the researcher goes through the data, so three situations were identified: some codes did not fit with any field material while other codes were flourished when the same segments had the same codes, but also some codes were emerged, acting as new codes (Miles and Huberman, 1994), which allows drawing codebook of the data (Appendix B).

For this study, after the researcher previewed and organized data into a manageable format via identifying the important ideas, the first-level coding was started by identifying meaning units that consisted of a single word, a partial or complete sentence, and a paragraph. However, in the first run-through, identifying meaning units was somewhat tentative to change. Once started thematic coding, a structured list of codes after revision was emerged to include larger meaning and constitutive characteristics.

After identifying meaning units, the researcher considered which of these units fit together into categories. Each meaning unit was tentatively placed in specific category and classified by specific code created for that category as either similar to or different from the others if the first two meaning units possess similar qualities and so on. Also, if the first two meaning units were not similar in the identified qualities, a separate category and new code were produced for the second one. The third meaning unit was examined for differences and similarities with the first and second category. If it differed, a third category and code were created. I repeated these steps to examine the remaining meaning units (Burnard, 1994; Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

All categories are emerged from research questions and reflected the critical events of participants’ stories. In this regard, categories expanded every time the researcher identified meaning units that were dissimilar from those which were already categorised. The meaning units that were difficult to place in any categories, they were set in a separate pile with other ones which were difficult also to be classified, but when reviewing all categories, the meaning units placed in a separated pile were inspected to choose what units fit together in new categories (Grinnell and Unrau, 2011:455).

After that, I assigned codes to categories, which were written in the margin next to the meaning units; and this made the data analysis became more complex because the codes became longer (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

I made a final look through the data for ensuring that my analysis would reflect what had been said by participants and to avoid any unexpected error that may emerge at the end of my analysis, I re-examined my thinking by illustrating and confirming what qualifies each meaning unit to fit with a particular category. This review included all categories to see how meaning units fit with each (Grinnell and Unrau, 2011:458). I asked a colleague and my supervisor to code two interviews following the same my rules that I devised; this process allowed me to ensure that rules and categories that I defined them were logic (Miles and Huberman, 1994). When I interviewed new participants the meaning units fit easily into my current categorisation scheme and no new categories emerged, I stopped first-level coding as it is called by (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1998) "*category saturation*". Thus, this gives an opportunity for the organization into chunks, which are related to, and needed for particular research question (Appendix D).

Memoing was used to form the initial codes; particularly, It allowed me to develop and document my thought and ideas that arose from the process of coding and analysing my data, which have conceptual content to move from practical to conceptual stage of analysis (Punch 2006; Birks et al, 2008). Regardless of how inconsequential these thoughts and ideas even impressions may initially appear, creation of a record in the form of memos ensures the preservation of such ideas that may later prove significant (Polit and Beck, 2006).

Data display involves organising information of data to draw some conclusions from data and move on to the next level of the research study (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Strauss, 1987). Miles and Huberman indicated the phrase "You know what you display" (1994:11) to indicate the data display. Data can be displayed in different ways: graphs, charts, networks, diagrams where there is no doubt that better data display is a major avenue to valid qualitative analysis because valid analysis requires, and is driven by, displays that are focused enough to permit a viewing of a fall data set in the same location, and are arranged systematically to answer the research questions (Miles and Huberman, 1994:91-92).

I adopted "conceptually ordered display" through using conceptually clustered matrix for *building display* and *drawing conclusion* via reading across the rows and reading down the columns. I built display format that (a) displayed all of the relevant responses of all main participants and document extracts on one sheet, (b) allowed an initial comparison between responses and between participants, (c) helped me see how data can be analysed further, (d) lent itself easily to cross-case analysis, and (e) provided some preliminary standardisation. As a result, the researcher had on one sheet: all respondents and responses to the same codes from interviews and documents (Miles and Huberman, 1994:128).

After building display, entering the data was the next step through going back to coded segments keyed to my research questions from the interviews and documents via cutting and pasting technique (Grinnell and Unrau, 2011). This required an extra column in each matrix to ensure not losing any additional notes emerged from the responses to be used ultimately for drawing conclusions. The next task was *drawing conclusions* via scanning across the rows and down the columns of the matrix in order to make contrast/comparisons between leaders by adopting the tactic of making contrast/comparisons; which lead to more conclusions from the variable matrices.

After that the researcher moved to cross-case analysis for these multiple cases after completing the analysis of each case separately. This was through utilising what Miles and Huberman (1994) called: mixed strategy through combing or integrating case and variable-oriented approaches. I utilised "staking comparable cases" strategy through generating the findings in each case in order to compare them across the three cases adopted. Therefore, I wrote up each case of the three cases that utilise a standard set of topics before I stacked the case-level displays in a meta-matrix, which provide further systematic comparison (Miles and Huberman, 1994:176).

The last stage of data analysis was reporting case studies. Yin (2009) suggests four formats for writing case study reports: 1) the classic single case study, where a single narrative is used for describing and analysing the case; 2) the multiple-case studies versions of the classic single case, which contains multiple narratives covering each of the cases singly; 3) the third type of written product applies to multiple-case studies only without separate chapters or sections devoted to the individual case;4) the last format covers either a multiple or single a single-case study, but does not contain the traditional narrative. Accordingly, I adopted the multiple-case version of the classic single case, which contains multiple narratives covering each of the cases singly as well as it contained a chapter covering the cross-case analysis and results (Yin, 2009).

3.7. LIMITATIONS FOR CASE STUDY RESEARCH

The major limitations of this thesis can be summarised in the following points:

- Although the study's findings may be applicable to other countries going through the same situation of instability in the region like Tunisia, Yemen, Egypt, Libya, Iraq, and Syria, the aim of this study is not to generalise to all 22 Arab countries because of the low number of interviewees into this qualitative case study by face to face interviews when comparing the number of participants with quantitative research.
- This research adopted for-profit organisations for investigation. It would be more comprehensive research study to provide also other sectors including public organisations to understand LD amongst different sectors due to the lack of published research on the topic in Syria. This makes the opportunity to involve other sectors too valuable.
- Most companies in Syria, particularly domestic companies, were strict and sensitive toward issues like recorded conversations under any reason. This made one of the three companies refuses to give permission to all members to give recorded interviews if they want to participate in my research. So they reluctant to provide information through recorded interviews because they have not accustomed to the qualitative kind of research.
- Data collection of this cases study research was conducted in a war situation; so this may make participants and researcher under pressure. Therefore this study recommends future research if there is an opportunity to re-research this study again to collect data when a country becomes in a state of truce to compare the findings with this study. This can help gain very strong evidence highlight LD process in Syria and how it is influenced.
- NVIVO was not used for this study for two reasons: First, I did not use NVIVO for analysing 5 interviews for the “RS4 report” (the University of Bedfordshire’s transfer to PhD stage report) in 2012. After completing this report, I utilised the NVIVO software uploaded upon the library’s computers at the university in order to see how data would look like by NVIVO. However, this software restricted me, which led to lose the main sense of the data, especially with regard to context theme because it involved sensitive national culture issues. So I decided to ignore it until I complete the whole data collection. Before I go back Syria to continue data collection on 26/07/2012, there was technical problem in the IT department at the university and I

could not download NVIVO on my laptop. As a result, I decided to leave it until I come back from Syria, but what happened is that my journey was extended from 2 months to 5 months, and I could not wait to go back the UK to begin data analysis. This is the reason beyond starting data analysis without using NVIVO.

3.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Most researchers agree that ethical consideration must be considered for the research participants, particularly, informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity (Illing, 2010; Wood and Ross-Kerr, 2010). The researcher confirms that the protection of data and participants' identity are a priority and also the maintenance of confidentiality of information. This case study gave the topic an ethical consideration before collecting final set of interviews for PhD degree, so it did not pose any kind of risk to participants. According to the University of Bedfordshire Research Ethics Scrutiny, an ethical approval form was presented to the interviewees before starting any interview.

Additionally, letters of consent was sent to all informants to obtain their informed consent. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, its duration and its overall design. The participants also were invited to take part in the study within some explanation and details of why they were chosen and their participant was entirely voluntary with possibility to withdraw their participants at any time. The participants were also informed about the time required for an interview, and they can review the interview scripts and the researcher's name and his contact details were provided for further information

A signed formal consent was obtained prior to conducting the interviews where all participants were informed that the interview transcripts would be available for review before analysis, and that this information would only be used for this PhD thesis. All the data generated during the course of research would be kept strictly confidential and securely in electronic form with password. All participants were treated anonymously using pseudonyms where the researcher explained this procedure and conveyed to the participants before any interview. It was also explained to participants the number of participants, and companies.

All interviews were conducted during working hours at meeting rooms at each company depending on the participants' time. Care was taken to avoid participants to be under any form of stress by avoiding the questions that relate to informants and their political affiliation;

or the role of politics in their jobs to make the informants more comfortable, as these are very sensitive issue in Syria.

The main risk to the participants in this research was a breach of confidentiality causing to the disclosure of negatives comments by participants about the companies' owners, colleagues, or even state. Consequently, this study serves to avoid such risk by using avoiding any use of the real names of participants.

Furthermore, the researcher managed to access some confidential information about any illegal activities of LICT Co regarding moving from investing for 15 years in Syrian market to owning most shares of the Latakia port in which it operates, so the researcher reserves the right not to publish any information that would harm persons responsible for leaking this information to the researcher.

3.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed research philosophy with an outline of research paradigms, and considered a justification for interpretivism research paradigm adopted for this research and case study methodology as presenting rigorous inquiry for this research; followed by criteria for the quality of case study research design. This chapter discussed data collection procedures that included several other sub-topics, and end with a set of limitations with the ethical consideration in this research.

CHAPTER FOUR: LICT Co

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter four reports the first case study, which concerns marine freight transportation. This is followed by a description of company background and profile. Following this, attention turns to the findings obtained from the case by considering, in turn, the application of LD in respect of the following issues: leadership behaviours/capabilities; LD methods; the leadership potentials for development, and contextual influences. Finally, a concluding section draws together the key points emerging from the case study.

4.2. COMPANY CONTEXT

Latakia International Container Terminal (LICT) is located in the container port of Latakia. This company is categorised as a large company. The number of employees of this company is 700 employees, but most of the workers at operational level are employed on short-term contracts and are renewed annually. The organisational structure of this company is divided into 13 sections between departments and divisions: maintenance & repair department, legal & PR department, operations division, information division, maintenance & repair department, information systems department, procurement department, human resource department, procurement department, safety & security department, information technology department, finance department, and accounting department. The top management team includes: maintenance & repair manager, legal & PR manager, and chief operation officer. The middle management level includes: chief information officer, terminal facilities manager, information system manager, engineering procurement manager, human resource manager, procurement manager, safety & security manager, information technology manager, and finance and accounting manager.

LICT belongs to CMA-CGM Group. In October 2009, LICT began its mission of setting benchmark standards not yet achieved in Syria in terms of service excellence, productivity, efficiency and consistency. It is situated on Syria's north-western shores on the Mediterranean Sea. Today, LICT has reached and continues to pursue its commitment in promoting and sustaining international standards with its position as Syria's most advanced container terminal. LICT owned by International Container Terminal Services in France but it is owned by a consortium of local and international establishments. LICT is committed to its parent companies in terms of development strategies and culture with some autonomy in some circumstances.

LICT attracts talented, qualified and committed individuals from Syria and abroad; and focuses on offering a stimulating yet challenging work environment in which employees can enhance their skills, their potential for leadership and personal growth. LICT plays an important role for HRD and for high-skilled workers through external and internal training sessions despite of the lack of stability in Syrian environment since 2011. In this regard, many managers left the company and moved to other jobs since 2011 after attending very expensive training and development courses, and building new experience to their career in LICT before Syria crisis in 2011. This company is one of few companies that supported the notion of LD between its people and learning culture.

It is worth to mention that although LICT Co, at first glance, appears that it has shared its business with state sector because Latakia port includes one berth for maritime transport and others for military ships and boats as well as their military equipment, Latakia International Container Terminal belongs to private sector and is the only company that controls Latakia port because LICT pays annual tax to the government (the Ministry of Transportation), as a kind of investment in port, but this is unknown to public because there is an attempt to own the port; so this company is intending to buy the port from the government according to anecdotal evidence of all its managers. LICT is led by its own management team, but supervised by the International Container Terminal Group in France. Learning and development strategies are based on internal and external requirements. This company is adopting western leadership practices. This company has several contributions into Syrian society in terms of employments, hosting universities delegations, other social contributions. The application of training and development occurs by off-job training and on-job training. The transferring of Western leadership practice occurs by local and foreign experts and by the parent company in France. Most managers had external and internal training sessions in Syria, France, Italy, Lebanon, and Japan. However, development strategies at LICT tend to be flexible to meet the requirements of Syrian environments.

4.3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

This section examines the LD methods and activities that were applied at LICT Co, and the purposes required to be achieved via these development methods/activities. Although different development methods/activities were utilised in the company since its inception in

2009, they were implemented on the base of action and classroom learning. Action learning, network, and feedback were utilised at LICT Co, as active development methods for developing its leadership. For example, the Engineering Procurement Manager noted:

> "The reason for selecting these methods for developing our leadership is that they best fit our needs and they are more effective than other methods do in the Syrian environment".

However, it is found that the purposes of development methods and activities at LICT Co were continuously changing according to its business environment; however, action learning, networking, and feedback had also other development purposes because they were applied after the company operated in 2009. The assistant finance manager stated:

> "...we do not use the development methods for a long time because of the fast change in our environment, which requires moving to other methods to develop the managerial competencies required to achieve our job, but action learning, feedback, networks have been used since we came to Syria, and what we need from each one has changed.... action learning was used for developing communication, feedback was used for cognitive competency and networking was not used; instead we used to adopt shadowing for developing self-management".

Additionally, it was found that although LICT adopted the same development strategy of its parent companies, their development methods and even their contents were not fully identical with the parent company and this reflected the privacy of the environment in which it works, as the following quote by the finance manager illustrates:

> "Paying more attention for adopting some development methods than others is because the current methods are more effective to meet our internal and external needs in this company. We adopt international strategy and we pursue the same development strategy of the parent company, but we are not able to use the same development methods or their content because this is connected with our own environment privacy; even if we are partly identical with the parent company in some types of development methods, this does not mean their purposes will be similar with those methods used in the parent company".

Table: 4.1. Three development methods and activities adopted at LICT

Development methods/activities	The purposes
• Action learning	• Business skills • Conflict management
• Network	• Communication • Strategic Thinking
• Feedback	• The ability to change • Understanding the whole

i. Action learning

LICT Co adopted action learning activity since it operated in Syria in 2009 because it is not a complicated activity to learn and develop the leadership capabilities required and because of it is a cheap development activity. It is found that action learning was utilised for the present jobs over Syria crisis because of its characteristics. The assistant finance manager stated:

> "Learning from daily tasks and events is a very successful activity and has many advantages. For us it does not cost the company extra money from our development budget; and it is simple and helps to develop our business skills that we need in daily jobs because leaders across all leadership positions work as monitors of daily tasks, events, crises, solutions. It helps understand what works effectively and what does not...etc".

In this regard, most of the twelve participants agreed that it is characterised by its strength for developing business skills that helps career development by repeating doing daily tasks, which allowed developing business skills at LICT Co. The assistant IT manager observed:

> "...Software for arranging containers' directions across terminals, the movement of vehicles and trucks, and technical skills regarding these issues require updating in this regard based on competitive market in Eastern Mediterranean; and thus developing these skills occur from repeating tasks. Therefore, action learning is the perfect activity that can develop our business skills, which ensures career development of individual leaders".

Additionally, action learning was used for additional purpose because Syria crisis increased internal conflicts among managers. This, therefore, encouraged a company to develop conflict management competency. In this regard, learning from action helped the managers at LICT learn by daily jobs and daily and weekly meetings, and repeating doing tasks with a low-cost result. For example, the chief operation manager stated:

> "Conflict management is learnt by action learning because leaders learn when they understand different situations and find the best solutions to tackle any problem, especially in unstable environments, which require full awareness of the needs; today the political conflicts create conflicts inside the company between employees, so daily and weekly meetings, teamwork and repeating this process helps solve the disagreements among most staff".

ii. Networking

Networking was the second development activity utilised at LICT. The twelve participants agreed that it was best used for developing leadership communication competency in today's job environment to enhance the performance. It is noted that there is agreement that developing the ability to communicate took place when working with others. In this regard, networking activity at LICT Co was the basis for exchanging experience about the behaviour required for the type of communication that should be used when working with employees from different political and religious belongs. This manifested clearly when communicating face to face with managers with long experience because this helped learn the art of communication effectively, as the following quote by the Manager of Engineering Procurement department at LICT Co illustrates:

> "Networking activity has helped us develop our communication skills through learning from other managers how they talk in seminars, act, what kind of language they use in different situations, how to react to problems, how to communicate to followers or colleagues in daily jobs, meetings, lunch time, teamwork, projects...etc. Communication is best developed by these kinds of networking, so we are using very new communication language in teamwork, this can reinforce the theory that says working with others develops the ability to communicate".

This was further supported by the manager of human resource division who stated:

> "Networking is effectively used to learn from others their communication skills, and helps build our communication ability through our social relationship in teams, breaks, seminars, assignments, lunch time…".

According to the Business Control & Internal Audit Manager, communication skills and ability to communicate are related to social awareness for understanding the nature of communication that should be used with different types of individuals. He stated:

> "This activity will be one of the promising development methods for leadership in 21st cent because it helps leaders learn by using different ways in teamwork or in group. This helps create strong relationship between individuals who are involved in the same team or group, which can include people from different managerial positions. This reduces the gap between managers and employees; thus, it helps develop socialisation inside the company, which is the essence of the ability to communicate".

Additionally, it is found that LICT Co used networking for important purposes, which reflected the political, social and economic unrest in Syria. Thus, as a result of the crisis in Syria, most of the companies in the Syrian market, especially the foreign ones, left the country, some companies were destroyed, while others had to make changes to meet the requirements of the surrounding environment. For LICT Co, networking was adopted for developing strategic thinking competency in some managerial positions. Accordingly, the head managers of operations division, HR division, and finance division confirmed that strategic thinking was required for their divisions since 2011. The development of this competency was via social relationship at the LICT networking activities, and this helped to collect information about the company needs. HR manager stated:

> "Networking develops strategic thinking in here by assessing other opinions and understanding their ideas via all forms of networking: projects, assignments, face-to-face relationship, meeting in seminars then strategic thinking can develop, especially if individuals own diverse sources of information collected from their relationships in all directions; the more understanding, the higher level of performance occur in our company".

iii. Feedback

Feedback method is another developmental method utilised at LICT. This method has been used since 2009 because it has multiple functions at LICT Co. Most of the twelve participants confirmed that this method is used for leadership needs through the rich information collected from all directions, and it is effectively used for developing the ability to understanding the whole competency by focusing on the data collected regarding the company, employees and the market, as HR manager noted:

> "We have been using this method since we operated our business three years ago because this programme helped our managers understand all departments' role in details, so now our managers have awareness in all other departments. In other words, this programme helped us develop understanding the whole in each department through sharing rich information with others in our meetings. Indeed, the quality and quantity of data provided by this method let us know everything in this company".

The finance manager stated that feedback method is perceived as an octopus because it is providing a big picture about LICT Co, individuals and its external environment. He stated:

> "It provides us awareness of the entire company and the employees and completing their tasks...etc when looking at the large numbers of feedback from different directions, this helps us gain a systematic knowledge horizontally and vertically across the organisational structure of this company".

Additionally, most of the twelve participants agreed that feedback method was also used for developing ability to change because a set of companies announced their withdrawal from the market because of their failure to change. In this regard, the Chief Operation Officer stated:

> "....The ability to lead change evolves by evaluating information from inside and outside this company because this helps us select what we need and how we should change in order to meet the internal and external requirements, and the degree of change required in this company. Briefly, without feedback method, it would make the application and development of change competency questionable".

As a result, LICT Co utilised the power of feedback method through the quality and quantity of information about the requirement of LICT Co, its people, and job. The terminal facilities manager stated:

> "...this method enables us to understand all details by information collected from a wide range of people which gives us chance for developing our ability to

> understanding of the entire LICT Co., and develop the ability to lead change because the nature of information collected by feedback reinforces our ability to change, the degree of this change, the location of this change and the target of this change”.

4.4. IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

At LICT Co, two tactics are used for understanding leadership needs. LICT conducts internal and external audits in which environmental analysis at the macro, meso and micro levels is used, as well as stakeholders’ feedback to first identify the company's weaknesses and threats and leadership needs, and then to identify and conduct necessary training and development methods and activities required to fill these voids. These are explained below.

Environmental Analysis

At the macro level, the findings reveal that LICT Co scanned and analysed the external environmental factors such as the economic, political, technological and social environments which were going through drastic change due to the civil war in Syria to identify the challenges and threats for the company, and at the same time to identify the leadership needs required for such a period, as well the necessary LD methods and activities.

Similarly, at the meso level, the company analysed such variables as its competitors, customers, suppliers and interest groups. At the micro level, the analysis incorporated analysis of all the internal organisational functions and activities including the HR practices and skills stock, to identify the gaps and weaknesses including the leadership behaviours/ capabilities required to overcome these weaknesses and to select the appropriate LD methods. This is illustrated by the following quote by the procurement manager who stated:

> “We look at our internal and external issues that affect our company including people, customers, interest groups, companies, competitors and others; also we have environment force analysis, such as the political instability that would affect everything. This helps us draw matrix about the weaknesses and challenges from different directions to define our leadership needs in-depth”.

Most of the twelve participants confirmed the important relationship between leadership needs and the company environment, as the finance manager, for example, added:

> “This requires us analysing our environment challenges that should be taken into an account to adopt the best leadership skills and abilities, and what development methods.... This includes political, economic, social and technical and other infrastructure”.

Stakeholders’ feedback

In addition, most of the twelve participants agreed that LICT Co adopted also feedback development methods to evaluate its leadership needs. In this regard, it was found that attention was paid to its employees’ feedback regularly due to their role in identifying the weaknesses that were not seen by the managers. This helped LICT Co to understand their employees’ requirements and what managers needed in order to improve the leadership behaviours/capabilities required, in turn, as the Chief Operation Officer stated:

> “We ask our employees for their feedback about the company and leaders’ performance because they are an active part for providing rich data to identify our weaknesses, which are not seen by me as a leader”.

Moreover, customers’ feedback at LICT Co was perceived as an active procedure for highlighting the weaknesses of job, company and staff performance. In particular, the perceptions of customers’ feedback reflected the real picture of the market and other companies’ experience through which LICT Co understood the nature of the leadership training required. In relation to this, the Business Control & Internal Audit Manager observed:

> “...This assessment covers not only people inside a company, but people outside this company, such as dealers, interests, and other customers because they can provide us very good information about how they classify their satisfaction to our service in cooperation with other competitors...”.

Similarly, it was found that LICT Co learns from the mistakes of other companies. This is when customers transfer their experience to LICT. The Terminal Facilities Manager stated:

> “We pay more attention to customers who had experience with other companies because they can transfer this experience to our company. This can help us to evaluate other local and foreign companies and comparing their development

strategy and practices with ours. Actually, this did help us very much to avoid lots of mistakes that occurred with other companies".

Also, it was found that three key instructors at LICT who were responsible for identifying leadership needs for development were HR division and top management, and the head office in France, so the information received about the environment analysis was discussed between LICT and the head office, but with the freedom in selecting the appropriate leadership needs for development with keeping in mind that this autonomy would not affect the parent company policy and strategy. The Engineering Procurement division manager noted:

> "Both top leadership and HR department in association with our parent company are the main instructors of our HRD practices; despite our parent company does not interfere in our development practices because it knows that we have our own environment that should be taken into an account".

It was found that the key resources of LD practices used in LICT are internet, HR experts in LICT and foreign experts from the head office. The HR manager stated:

> "Our experts both local and foreign transfer Western experience regarding management practices to Syrian environment and also we use the internet because it is a faster resource for learning in 21^{st} cent development strategies. Indeed, what is applied in America or Europe is likely to be the same as what we apply because we share their resources and experience because I worked in Italy, Lebanon, France, and Syria, I found they have the same management resources, but in Syria we rely more on local and foreign experts".

Additionally, it was found that although there was no clear process for identifying individuals for training, there is a general belief saying that training was required for all managers, regardless of their managerial positions. LD targeted all managers at operational level, middle management, and even top management, but it ignored the others who had no management role, as the following quotes illustrate:

> "according to job description in this company each one has its role to do either is a leader or an employee, so leadership training is needed in this case to each manager to be active and effective in his position" (Procurement manager).

> "...individuals who are not leaders tend to focus on business skills that help them to perform tasks rather than leadership skills which not useful for them even they do not need" (Maintenance and repair assistant manager).

Also, it was found that LD did not focus on specific concept of competencies; rather its short-term focus increased the needs to meet jobs, individuals, and company's requirements through developing mixed competencies that target different purposes. In other word, LD approach tends to focuses on the behaviours and capabilities that meet today's jobs, individuals, and LICT requirements. The chief operation officer stated:

> "This company develops its managers based on its requirements, so these requirements can be identified by the environment surrounding its business. The most competences that we adopt and develop in this company are around personal competencies or company and the competences that required in between for competing tasks effectively".

This was further explained by Business Control & Internal Audit Manager who stated:

> "Our competences, since we operated in Syria, were divided into three groups: ones serve managers needs, ones serve the effectiveness of our core business, and the others serve the company needs regarding its surrounding environments Indeed, This relies on when you work, why you work and how to work. This company requires multi-type competencies within each development strategy or plan or crisis. For example, after Syria crisis we have been focusing on the ability to change, business skills, communication skills, and the ability to have big picture of the entire LICT that target the groups, which I mentioned earlier...".

4.5. LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS AND CAPABILITIES

In considering the content of leadership training and development required at LICT, it was noted that because of Syria's crisis, the company focused on developing a set of the leadership behaviours and capabilities that were essentially considered to be able to deal with these changes in the environment and new challenges. In this regard, although LICT adopt the same development strategy of its parent company that focuses on developing managers at operational, middle, and top management, it has flexibility to select its leadership competencies that meet Syrian environment. The HR manager noted:

> "Following the same development strategy of the mother company is strict. So we are adopting the same rules regarding targeting all managers at the same time, focusing on long-terms and short-terms training, informal and formal training...etc, but our company has freedom to select its own development methods and their own contents to meet our requirements. Yes, the parent company knows what we are doing because we are following the same training strategy with flexibility regarding the type of leadership competencies and their development methods".

Accordingly, six behaviours and capabilities were emphasised in the LD plans and activities as listed in table 4.2, and discussed in the section below. However, it was noted that the content of leadership training and development before Syria crisis at LICT included three leadership competencies communication, cognitive competency, and self-management. It was found that the major difference after comparing the leadership competencies before and after Syria crisis was in that leadership competencies before the crisis had long-term purposes, whereas after the crisis had short-term purposes. The assistant finance manager noted:

> "Before Syria crisis we had three competencies: communication, self-management and cognitive competence. But now we tend to have specific-approach skills for short term purposes...".

Table 4.2: Six vital leadership behaviours and capabilities required at LICT Co

The Type of Leadership Behaviour/ Capabilities Required
• Understanding the whole • Strategic thinking • communication • leading change • Conflict management • Business skills

i. Understanding the whole

After 2011, attention turned to understanding the entire organization's capabilities and its environment internally and externally due to the increased instability and uncertainty in the company's environment. Most of the twelve participants confirmed that there was a need for understanding the internal and external environments in detail; and this was required for all managerial levels because collecting such large amount of information helped managers in different positions to evaluate each situation more clearly and take for information at the company. The HR manager observed:

> “Leaders must be able to know the managerial structure and organisational design because this will allow leaders to be able to understand the company, people, and jobs through which it can solve the problem with high level of harmony amongst these factors”.

This was further supported by the manager of engineering procurement division who linked between effective managers and the full understanding of the entire LICT Co, and noted that:

> “Effective and successful managers must know and understand everything. Otherwise, they fail to manage and lead effectively as it will be like "running water under a person without his awareness" because this would reduce the influence of managers and leaders on employees”.

Additionally, it was found that because of the instability of LICT environment, it supported the full understanding of the needs of the interior that included the employees, policy, rules, managerial structure, and business strategy adopted to meet the external challenges effectively, as this would maintain the direction of the company in light of political conflicts. For example, the Terminal Facilities manager highlighted the role of the ability to understand the whole, as a strategic competency due to the instability of LICT environment. He stated:

> “....Managers should be aware of all details and general issues that occur in the company to make the right decisions, because misunderstanding or failing to diagnose the situations will lead to their decline and failure. The ability to understand everything is needed in today’s business and should be placed under lens by experts, particularly, if a company is working in an unstable environment, such as LICT Co, this competency is needed for managers in the middle and top level”.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that career development at LICT Co was linked to the managers’ ability to build their experience from understanding the whole because this would lead to saving time regarding understanding the role and duties required in each managerial position. Additionally, awareness of the employees helped managers to understand the leadership behaviour required with their employees, particularly after 2011 due to the political conflicts that developed to religious conflicts. This has led to change in the work environment and created lack of trust among employees and their leadership. Consequently, it was indicated that understanding the whole allowed managers to use the behaviour required with each employee. The Business Control & Internal Audit Manager noted:

> “...Career development is based on the experience that was built about the company from previous positions....because leaders cannot lead without previous knowledge about their employees for many reasons. First, not all employees are similar to each other; in other words, what can work with one employee, it may not work with another one. Second, leaders should know their employees behaviours to select the best leadership behaviours that fit their needs”.

ii. Strategic thinking

It was found that the instability of LICT Co’s environment acted to adopt strategic thinking competency for all managerial positions because this required a quick response from most managers at LICT Co across different managerial positions. This manifested clearly when the company has been losing its managers or managers go abroad for a long time. The Deputy Chief Operation Manager at LICT Co observed:

> “...because managers in managerial positions should not only pay attention to daily tasks or details, but they should draw plans to maintain a company in the right direction even if they are absent for a long time”.

Similarly, the HR manager confirmed the importance of strategic thinking and linked to the development of this competency by all forms of networking relationship:

> “Managers must understand our surrounding environmental influence to determine the best development strategy by which we can build our training plans, but this occurs only when we have full understanding about LICT Co., and its people through working in small and large network environment to predict the future based on our environmental change”.

More specifically, the Finance Assistant manager linked the importance of critical thinking competency to the ability to work in the light of political, economic, religious, social conflicts that forced companies in Syria to be ready for all situations. She highlighted the importance of critical thinking competency even more importance in some environments than others, and stated the following:

> "Strategic thinking allows managers knowing what are expected and how to act in different situations and how to analyze the company by its internal and external information because our company is working in dynamic environment that need active, analytical, creative and critical managers to achieve the results required".

iii. Conflict management

Although LICT Co adopted strict policy of its parent company, LICT Co had the freedom and autonomy in decision-making after Syria crisis regarding leadership training to tackle the challenges because of crisis. Accordingly, attention was paid to conflict management competency in light of surrounding conflicts. In this regard, the deputy chief operation manager insisted that there was a need for developing conflict management competency for all divisions at LICT Co in the dynamic business environment that created conflict situations and unexpected challenges between employees after the civil war, which affected doing tasks effectively. This, in turn, required awareness and predicting the solutions to avoid any negative results of the conflicts. The deputy chief operation manager stated:

> "Conflict management is another competency that must managers develop because we are operating in an unstable environment that requires a continuous change. The best example is this crisis in Syria, which requires from us diagnosing situations when workplace conflict works against our company objectives because of the external forces".

Similarly, it was found that the political, economic, and social conflicts at LICT Co increased the importance for adopting conflict management to fill gap between managers in an attempt to help them to resolving conflicts concerning their controversial ideas and suggestions, as appropriate with LICT Co and their satisfaction. For example, the Chief Operation Officer stated:

> "We use, in this division, conflict management competency to fill gaps between managers because of the conflicts that occurs as a result of the lack of political and economic stability, with taking into consideration all managers' satisfaction for choosing the appropriate solutions. LICT Co tends to adopt this competency in all its divisions because of its sensitivity and urgent needs nowadays".

iv. Communication

The nature of leadership used at LICT Co since it operated was characterised by its openness. Given that Syria lacks stability, LICT Co realised that adopting traditional management styles such as autocratic styles did not work due to the instability of its environment that required deliberate steps and calculated results through consultation and communication with others. In this regard, the importance of communication competency manifested clearly after Syria crisis. For example, IT assistant manager linked between the effective managers and the ability to communicate, especially in today business world. He noted:

> "...without communication skills managers are not effective managers because our business job does not work with traditional management that ignore any form of communication with others".

In this regard, most of the twelve participants confirmed that communication was a strategic competency at LICT Co due to a large number of employees at LICT Co that increased the need for communication competency across all managerial positions to fill gap among them and encourage individuals to be more active and creative, as the HR manager stated:

> "Communication is an important competency for our company because a large number of employees led to increase leadership positions that require such competency to activate communication with those who are at higher level and lower level. Also because most tasks and projects should be collectively achieved in teams or groups, so team members should have the ability to communicate for reinforcing their creativity. Otherwise, team members will feel they are passive staff and their opinions are ignored".

Additionally, it is found that communication competency at LICT Co provided managers at lower levels with the opportunity to ask their managers at higher level for help in order to complete the tasks required effectively. This was evident through the shared leadership that supported communication to facilitate transferring information across managerial positions at LICT. The Engineering Procurement division manager noted:

> "...it makes doing tasks much easier through ignoring organisational structure, so employees can be close to their managers and can ask their help far away from traditional routine".

Similarly, the finance assistant manager indicated that the degree of freedom in speaking and listening to others in teamwork helped individuals commit to work at LICT Co. It is found that empowered individuals increased their own sense of skilfully using language and oral presentation learned from other managers with long experience in meetings and teamwork. This reinforced the relationship between managers and employees. As a result, because of civil war, LICT Co took it upon itself to adopt communication competency to bring the views between managers and employees due to their political and religious conflicts. The finance assistant manager noted:

> "…the ability to communicate with others in team and effective communication skills helped to empower our staff by providing an opportunity to others for speaking, listening to others' ideas. In turn, this is effectively working with us, our people commit to their team because they feel they are active members; and when team members use the same language and tone used by their managers, they would feel that communicational gap have removed with those who are at higher managerial levels".

v. The desire to change

Given that LICT Co works in an unstable environment, most of the twelve participants confirmed that LICT endeavoured somewhat to adopt flexible culture, and development strategy. This was evident through the change of behaviours and capabilities required. Accordingly, the ability to change was a major need at LICT Co to meet surrounding challenges, which had negative impacts on business companies working in Syrian market. The maintenance and repair manager noted:

> "This ability is required in dynamic environments, such as Syrian market that want us to be aware of what is going on in a company and how to change".

Similarly, the Finance assistant manager linked between the business environment change and the leadership behaviour/capabilities required in the present job and future job. She stated:

> "…As leadership differs from situation to another, leadership behaviours and capabilities should be flexible to change... what it was working in the past is not necessary to be working today and future because leadership science and its development are changing based on business environment change".

IT assistant manager highlighted the negative implications for resistance to change in Syrian market. He linked between the ability to learn and the flexibility for change, especially in an unstable environment. He observed:

> "All of us should accept new knowledge and avoid resistance to change because our business requires from us adopting flexibility for acquiring knowledge".

Additionally, this competency was attributed to the nature of business world that became more complicated than ever before. This manifested clearly in business environment in Syria that acted to place most companies even LICT under pressure. Business Control & Internal Audit Manager noted:

> "Because today's world is rapidly changing, business world is changing as well, so the nature of leadership adopted in a company should be fixable to change".

Consequently, the ability to change reflected the real tendency of LICT Co toward training and development to meet the present job requirements, as the Engineering Procurement division manager stated:

> "The ability to adapt and change is the first stage into development process because managers in this ability should be flexible, and accept acquiring new knowledge, which is important, especially in today's business".

vi. Business skills

In addition to the above skills, which operated in the container shipping sector, needed to have and develop business skills that were firm-specific and industry specific skills, and which leaders needed to have to lead effectively in the company. Thus the Terminal Facilities Manager stated:

> “LICT has its own business type that differs from other companies, so its business skills are different... each company has its own skills because they differ regarding the size and sector...”.

This was also supported by the Maintenance and repair manager who stated the following:

> “Business skills are the essence of any company, so this can tell you how the sector type determines the nature of business in each company”.

The maintenance and repair assistant manage linked between understanding business skills and career development, and noted:

> “Leaders' experience in managerial positions can be summarised by understanding business and technical skills. Leaders must understand any problem around business and the technical issues at operational level; even if they do not focus on daily details”.

It was found that business skills at LICT Co were related to the operational levels and were the interests of managers across all managerial positions because career development was relevant to the degree that each manager understands these skills. In this regards, business skills at LICT Co included using technology and container traffic inside and outside the port, movement of vehicles, and people. The Deputy Chief Operation Manager stated:

> “LICT has business skills that are connected with the operational level, such as technical skills related to container traffic to and from the Latakia port, the movement of vehicles, using company's network and change the cranes’ direction. Such skills are the topic of any company. Manager and leaders should know these technical skills because they are the basis to solve any problem at operational level, so misunderstanding these skills would make any solution ineffective”.

4.6. CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCE ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section examines the factors influencing LD at LICT Co under the context's umbrella. This included the following areas: competitive strategy, company sector, technology, company size, international strategy, organisational culture, and national culture, but this chapter will summarize these factors in table 4.3 and the contents of contextual influences on LD will be discussed in chapter seven.

Table 4.3: Contextual influences on leadership development at LICT

	LICT
Competitive strategy	• Differentiation strategy • Low cost leadership strategy
Company sector	• Business type: marine freight transportation and • Sector type: for-profit company
Company size	• Large numbers of employees • Organisational managerial levels
International strategy	• Balanced development strategy supporting LD
Organisational culture	• Balanced organisational culture supporting LD
Technology	• Poor technology infrastructure; • Weakness in technology use
National culture aspects	• Religion • Gender • Wasta • political and economic sanctions

4.7. CONCLUSION

This chapter on LICT Company sought to detail the LD which took place in response to internal and external environment requirements. This was reflected on the leadership behaviour/capabilities required and the type of development methods required at LICT Co. Identifying leadership needs took place by understanding the internal and external requirements. With regard to context, it was found that LD in LICT Co was influenced by short-term and long-term factors in general, but these factors were divided into two parts: 1) factors influencing the application of leadership development; and 2) factors seen as determinants of LD at LICT Co.

LD at LICT Co were mostly targeting present job because of its environment change. The following points were found:

- Adopting communication competency to facilitate doing tasks that requires distributed leadership to fill gap between employees and managers due to Syria crisis.
- Adopting strategic thinking due to the fast change of surrounding environment that required a quick response from most managers across all managerial positions.
- The introduction of a policy of collective learning by using network activity as a means for developing communication and strategic thinking.
- Leading change competency as a result of the surrounding changes that manifested clearly after the political conflicts.
- Understanding the whole competency was a result of the lack of stability in the country in which LICT Company works, which required a full understanding of all details from all directions in order to facilitate evaluating each situation correctly under the unstable environment.
- The introduction of a policy of learning from assessment by using feedback method as a means for developing leading change and understanding the whole through the quantity and quality of data collection from all direction.
- Adopting business skills was to facilitate tasks linked to the core business of LICT Company.
- Adopting the conflict management competency for resolving controversies in the light of the conflicts and unexpected challenges after Syrian crisis.
- The introduction of a policy of learning from experience by using action learning activity for developing business skills and conflicts management through learning from repeating events, problems, tasks, or meetings.

It was noted that the leadership behaviour and capabilities used at LICT Co were best to suit its current environment. Additionally, adopting the three development methods for developing conflict management, business skills, understanding the whole, leading change, strategic thinking, and communication was because of their characteristics. First, it was found that these three development methods were characterised by their low cost that suit the financial potentials at LICT Co after Syria crisis. Second, the development methods used to develop the leadership behaviour/capabilities required were more effective to achieve the results required in the unstable environment of LICT Co.

Moreover, identifying leadership needs at LICT Co took place through evaluating and analyzing environmental forces in the country in which LICT works as well as internal and external stakeholders' feedback. In this regard, it was found also that there was a dynamic interaction between the leadership needs and the internal and external environment of LICT Company that helped highlight the type of LD required.

As regards the context, it was found that although there were temporary and permanent factors affecting LD after Syria crisis in 2011, there were differences between the determinant factors of LD and the factors influencing the application of LD at LICT Company.

In relation to the determinant factors, it was found that competitive strategy, the size of LICT Co, its sector, its international strategy, and its organisational culture were taken into consideration, acting as the key determinants of LD at LICT Co. First, although LICT Co added low cost leadership strategy to its differentiation strategy after 2000, the differentiation strategy was its main strategy that supported leadership development for high-skilled staff. Second, a large number of employees required increasing the manager roles and responsibilities, which required, in turn, training and development. Third, the type of LICT sector supported leadership training and development because of being for-profit sector and because of being classified under service sector, which required continuous training of managers. Forth, although organisational culture and international strategy were flexible, particularly after Syria crisis, the parent company policy supported training and development of managers across managerial levels. This was evident by assessing and evaluating stakeholders and its environment to identify leadership needs. However, it was found that the determinants of LD were perceived as temporary factors affecting LD after 2011.

In turn, it was found that the factors affecting the application of LD were perceived as permanent factors since LICT Co began its business in Syria in 2009. In this regard, it was found that national culture aspects and technology were perceived as the main factors affecting LD at LICT Co. In relation to technology, the infrastructure of technology before and after Syria crisis in 2011 was a real barrier to the application of LD because of the lack of support by the government; also it was targeted by most terrorist groups. Additionally, a clear gap was found between managers regarding technology use, especially between old and young managers, which acted to slow down leadership training sessions.

In national cultural factors, first, it was found that it was differentiated between men and women regarding external trainings for security reasons; and men at LICT Co refused working under women leadership because they believed that women were best for home's works and family's support. However, many men did not have managerial talents and the desire to develop, which was negatively reflected on transferring what was learnt into practice. Second, career development was influenced by Wasta when selecting individuals lacking leadership talents; or even ability to develop. This also affected transferring leadership knowledge into practice at LICT Company.

Third, Syria crisis that were altered to religious conflicts increased the gap between employees and managers from different religious backgrounds. So leadership training that targeted present job to tackle challenges due to these conflicts failed to present a clear schedule of leadership development. The reason was due to the fast changes of training and development strategy that target the present challenges including the religious conflicts.

Fourth, it was found that Western sanctions were imposed on Syrians since the 1970s, but they reached a peak in 2011 because of the national values and the culture of resistance against the Western interests in Arab world in general and Syria in particular. This was negatively reflected not only on Syrians and their governments, but all companies working in Syrian market including LICT Co because external training was challenged by gaining VISA to attend an external training. Furthermore, customers were punished because of their dealing with companies working in Syrian market, which affected the annual income in general and development budget in particular at LICT Co.

CHAPTER FIVE: AF-RO CO

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports the second case study, which concerns hospitality Company taken over by an Arabic company called Rotana Group. This chapter initially provides a description of company context. Following this, attention turns to the findings obtained from the case by considering, in turn, the application of LD in respect of the following issues: leadership behaviours/capabilities; development methods; identifying leadership needs for development, and contextual influences on LD. Finally, a concluding section draws together the key points emerging from the case study.

5.2. COMPANY CONTEXT

Afamia-Rotana is one of the properties that belong to Rotana Group. It is located in Latakia city. This resort is categorised as a large company. The number of employees is between 200 and 400 based on the season. The organisational structure is divided into three levels: operational level that involves all workers and employees from all managers who provide direct and indirect services to customers. The second is middle management that includes: the head of HR department, HR assistant manager, employment manager, the head of leisure department, the head of marketing department, the head of reception department, the head of IT department, the head of finance department, general relation manager, the head of security department. The third level is top management that include both the chairman and the head of the food and leverage department. The educational qualification of employees can be classified as follow: 75 percent have graduate degrees, 20 percent are university and tourism institution students; and 5 percent have higher secondary degree. This property includes 8 divisions: Strategic Planning division; Finance & Procurement division; Food & Beverage Operations division; Sales & Marketing division; Rotana Rewards division; Human Resources division; Design, Planning, Health & Safety Executive (HSE) & Technical Services division; and Technology division. The large size of resort has increase the importance of HR department in terms of employments and identifying the training and development needs for developing the managerial staff in order to provide a high-level performance within its differentiation strategy.

Af-Ro Co is for-profit company, established in 2008. The five-star hotel in Latakia city is the resort destination of Syria. This resort belongs to Rotana Hotels and managed by Rotana Group that includes investments in Travel, media, music and hotels in the Middle East. It is owned by the Saudi Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal and by News Corporation. This company has two properties in Syria, in Damascus and Latakia. This five-star hotel adopts the mother company policy with some flexibility in terms of the type of the training and development required. Most employees at this company are Syrian, but the managers are Syrian and Arab. Furthermore, managerial development at Af-Ro Co begins and finishes from the company itself because the mother company respects the privacy of each country in which its brunches operate. Developing staff for managerial roles is based on internal and the surrounding environment requirements, so HR department and the top management are the major players for selecting the type of leadership practices after consulting the mother company.

5.3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

This section aims to examine the LD methods that were applied at Af-Ro Co and the purposes required to be achieved via these development methods and activities. It was found that although Af-Ro adopted different types of development methods after it operated in 2008, the development methods that were applied at Af-Ro after 2008 were continuously changing, or their purposes were changing or some of them were cancelled and others were still working because of their fit to the company's requirements. The information system manager stated:

> "Although feedback, job rotation, and action learning were adopted since we operated, their importance was seen since the civil war in Syria....they are more effective in our environment to transfer our leadership needs since the beginning of the political conflict in 2011; however, we used to apply other types of training and development that fit our needs before the crisis".
>
> "We cancelled some development methods, such as external training, formal programmes and Hospitality degrees because of their high costs and because our budget decreased, so we are currently relying only on the cheap methods that suit our requirements, which include: action learning, job rotation, and feedback. So this can explain why some methods are more effective and successful than others" (the chairman).

However, it should be noted that the application of development methods after Syria crisis was based on experiential learning, which was more informal development methods. In this regard, job rotation, action learning activity, and feedback methods were utilised at Af-Ro, as appropriate with its requirements. The manager of employees' development:

> "Our current development methods group, action learning activity, feedback, and job rotation, are based on learning from experience, as appropriate with our current requirements".

Consequently, Af-Ro Co attached great importance to the purposes wanted from each development method. First, the nature of LD required reflected the international development strategy and culture of parent company under which company-wide were applied; at the same time, understanding the privacy of the context in which a company works increased its need to be taken into consideration. Second, Syrian crisis increased the need for developing leadership in Af-Ro Co within its financial capabilities by focusing on learning from experience and self-analysis. Third, the instability affected the annual income and the development budget at Af-Ro Co, and this had impacts on the type of development methods. Consequently, Af-Ro Co adopted cheap development methods to meet its internal/external environment requirements. The HR manager observed:

> "Three reasons for using these three methods are: first they are supported by our head office for addressing our property's challenges; second learning from experience and self-analysis are best to develop our leadership knowledge; third the advantage of their low costs for our company".

Table 5.1: Three development methods and activities emerging from Af-Ro Co

Development methods/activities	**The purposes**
• Action learning	• Business skills • Decision-making and solving problem
• Job rotation	• Communication
• Feedback	• Self-awareness • Adaptability

i. Action learning

Af-Ro Co changed its development strategy based on its priorities after 2011, especially, a large number of companies left the market because of the lack of political, economic, and social stability. Af-Ro Co attempted to seek for alternatives for ensuring its good reputation by using informal development methods to achieve the objectives desired. For example, the marketing manager observed in relation to this, that:

> “.... it is the best-fit method with our company, and can confirm our commitment to training despite of being at a low level because we are under pressure and many companies have closed down or gone bankrupt as a result of civil war and political conflicts”.

At Af-Ro Co, most of twelve participants agreed that action learning activity helped managers from different departments to participate in solving-problem and decision-making in meetings, crises and daily jobs. The reception manager stated:

> “....learning from action is the best practice for developing managers on solving problem or decision-making through its components, such as teamwork, daily assignments, crises...”.

This process helps managers to build their experience through repeating decision-making and solving problem across all forms of action, as the Customer Service manager stated:

> “Decision-making and solving problem are developed by learning from experience… through repeating doing tasks in daily jobs, meetings, teamwork, events, crisis. So this process helps us to build more experience; and also it helps us to be very active by increasing our creativity and innovation for serving our guests”

Creativity and innovation were clearly noted through the nature of problems solved or the quality of decisions made. For example, the security manager at Af-Ro indicated the role of action learning for creative decision-making and solving problem. He stated:

> “....the characteristics of learning from action encourage our creativity in decision-making and solving-problem in general, and in some exceptional situations in particular. For instance, how we deal with some situation when some guests bring their weapons when visiting our hotel...”.

However, action learning activity was also used for developing business skills performance by using computer software in the area of hospitality in most departments to manage customers' facilities at Af-Ro Co with a high level of quality. Action learning was effectively used to develop managers when the hotel was updating its technology equipment, as the general relation manager illustrates:

> "Action learning is best used for developing business skills specialised in hospitality and hotel sector..... by understanding training software, technical skills for communication purposes with colleagues or for self-learning; such skills are developed by 'learning from repeating doing tasks daily".

The Marketing manager told the following story:

> "I have been working on software daily since 2008. I've recently suggested changing the adopted software in my department because of its weakness; this was noted after the political and economic sanctions by the West on Syria..., its daily use helped us to make impression on its strengths and weaknesses".

Although action learning was used before the crisis, Af-Ro Co did not use it because it is one of the secondary activities. After the recent events surrounding Af-Ro Co, action learning activity proved its power in an unstable environment and its role to achieve the result desired effectively in stable and unstable environments. The assistant human resource manager stated:

> "This activity was used to develop solving-problem and decision-making skills, as an informal activity before the crisis in 2011, but we did not believe that it can do the same role even during the crisis, now we are really surprised that we are completing the purposes that we want by this activity effectively".

ii. Job Rotation

This activity was another development activity utilised at Af-Ro Co. Most of the twelve participants agreed that job rotation was used for developing communication. Most individuals at Af-Ro Co either worked or willing to work abroad. This increased the need for developing different types of communication. It was found that business strategy of five-star hotel might focus on the need for an understanding of such issues as, ethics, social, and cultural aspects of its internal and external stakeholders, which were different from department to another and from hotel to another; and even amongst customers because of their different cultural backgrounds. Ro-Af Co supported learning from different environments because what worked in one country may not work in Af-Ro. The reception manager told the following story:

> “Once when I was working as a reception manager in one of the Arab Gulf countries, I had a big problem, because a group of young women visited our Hotel and asked to keep their rooms’ keys with them when they go out, but the policy of our hotel did not allow us to do so, they used hard words with one of our reception staff. After that, I invited one of them to my office to solve this problem. But I accidentally made the matter worse than it is because I throw greetings on the Syrian way using shaking hands, which is a method not used in the Gulf countries for communication between men and women, which made this problem more difficult”.

Af-Ro Co utilised two types of rotation. First, external job rotation was used by exchanging staff with other hotels in Rotana Group to help managers learn from different environments and different backgrounds for transferring their experience to Af-Ro Co. This type helped participants to learn how to communicate with not only Arab managers or guests, but with others from different cultures working in, or visiting these hotels. Especially, the types of guests were different: presidents, prime ministers, princes, kings, businessmen and rich people. Af-Ro Co used external job rotation because of adopting the international strategy and organisational culture of its parent company. The general relation manager stated:

> “...external rotations helped our managers to learn what is applied in other hotels regarding communication skills. This is because internal and external stakeholders of Rotana Hotels Group are Arab and foreign, and their guests are different, but, for us, they are mostly local because of the political sanctions on Syria, and most foreign and Arab do not prefer visiting, or working in our property”.

Additionally, internal rotation was also used at Af-Ro Co across its departments because of the cultural sensitivity of its employees, which was a critical issue to Rotana Hotels in general and Af-Ro Co in particular. After 2011, the guests of Af-Ro Co were mostly local from different Syrian cities that have also different habits, traditions, and norms. It was found that although Syrians shared such issues as, nationality, history, religion, and language, the application of cultural and social rules were various in terms of bigotry and openness. The manager of employees' development department noted:

> "....rotations across all departments and divisions allow us acquiring experience by understanding different views by communicating with employees who are from different political parties and religion sects. Learning by rotations help managers to reduce the aggressive tendency of both employees and guests because of the crisis. So avoiding, or reducing the rick of social habits, political and religious conflicts accompanied with employees or guests occurs when we communicate, dialogue, and listen to a wide set of views via job rotation".

Similarly, after 2011, Af-Ro Co created friendship environments in light of the tensions and mental fatigue for employees and guests and even Syrian society. Using internal rotation helped defuse tension amongst employees, and their managers. Accordingly, this helped improve communication skills of managers through each stage of rotation process. The assistant human resource manager stated:

> "Simply, rotation in different departments inside one division and other divisions.... helps to build social relations though the right technique of communications, which is the basis for building this relationship because we need it today more than ever 'to soothe hearts".

Consequently, job rotation was perceived as a means of learning from experience and social learning. It was noted that improving communication skills was connected with three elements: 1) changing job locations; 2) communicating with new people; 3) working with different forms of challenges. This experience helped managers understand the types of communication that should be used and how to use. The financial manager in Af-Ro Co stated,

> "each department or division in this hotel or other hotels uses different communication skills because of their difference in terms of their people, the nature of problems, and job location, so rotation in each department helps us to know how the art of communication occurs and why some skills tend to be more important than others...".

iii. Feedback

Feedback was another developmental method adopted at Af-Ro Co. The twelve participants confirmed that feedback was a strategic method at Af-Ro Co and had multiple roles at Af-Ro Co. First, it was effectively adopted for identifying leadership needs. For this reason, it was noted that Af-Ro Co gathered a large amount of information from employees, managers, customers, and interests in order to draw a big picture about its requirements, as the general relation manager in Af-Ro Co illustrates:

> "The rich data collected by this development method helps understand our weaknesses to tackle because we are managers, it is not necessary to see all our weaknesses by ourselves..... Feedback method is an ideal way to improve our own leadership. Also, it allows us understanding our hotel's environment to change".

Second, feedback became a preferred method at Af-Ro Co, especially after Syria crisis. It was found that attention paid to short-term development strategies targeting today's jobs. Most participants, except one, agreed that feedback method was used for developing self-awareness competency because collecting rich data from different directions helped participants understand what they need. The manager of the employees' development department:

> "This hotel cannot focus on future development, so this is left to each manager by on-job training including our development methods or off-job training including.... meetings with academic tutors...etc. Therefore this hotel attempts to develop self-awareness competency because it helps to explore what we need in our complicated environment. In turn, feedback method helps develop and improve our self-awareness by regular assessments".

However, all participants at Af-Ro Co, except one, confirmed that feedback method was also used for developing adaptation. It was noted that developing the ability to adapt via feedback method took place by comparing rich data collected from stakeholders with new managers' experience to conclude the difference with their previous job. Additionally, feedback method developed the ability to adapt through the picture that a manager had after understanding a wide set of internal and external views. The security manager noted:

> "This method gives managers critical information about themselves, Af-Ro Co, or job, which help them change to meet the requirements... the best example is our political conflicts, which made our business market unstable, increased the need to adapt to all situations by openness..... Feedback method, therefore, helps develop this competency because it is the engine of this company".

The role of feedback method for developing adaptation after leaving most managers Af-Ro Co to work abroad. This made Af-Ro Co searching for new staff continuously after 2011. Most new managers applying for Af-Ro vacancies were either without experience in hospitality and hotel sector or used to work in other sectors. In this regard, feedback method was perceived as an effective method to overcome this challenge. The IT manager stated,

> "...we use feedback also to supports the ability to adapt to new culture and new situations, especially When the new managers come to this hotel, they have an opportunity to review previous feedback to see the nature of managers' weaknesses, hotel's weaknesses, and other weaknesses in this hotel and compare that with their previous experience, they can build their adaptation to our culture and forget their previous one in previous companies".

5.4. IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Leadership needs at Af-Ro hotel were characterised by the exceptional needs of Af-Ro environment after 2011 due to civil war. This section addressed the tactics and mechanisms used for identifying leadership needs in Af-Ro Co.

Environmental Analysis

The twelve participants confirmed Af-Ro was analysing its environment at three levels: micro, meso and macro. At the macro level, it was found that Af-Ro Co analysed its macro environment because it believed that understanding leadership needs in isolation from macro environment would lead to failure in achieving company's goals because of drastic change of political, economic and social environment after Syria's crisis. Also, identifying leadership needs for development by scanning the macro environment has become an important need for this period. Similarly, at the meso level, Af-Ro analysed such variables as the competitors, customers and suppliers. At micro level, all internal organisational functions were incorporated in the analysis to identify the behaviours and capabilities required to overcome the challenges and weaknesses. The HR manager observed:

> "We use PEST analysis to evaluate our business and leadership needs. We analyze our marketing environment that includes political, economic, and social-cultural, and other issues to determine the type of leadership that should implement in order to achieve the company goals because each environment or situation requires specific leadership type, competencies, capabilities, and development methods".

The IT manager in Af-Ro Co noted:

> "There is relationship between identifying leadership competencies required and their development methods from one side and the environment from the other side because environment reflects the nature and kind of leadership skills required and the type of development methods required for this purpose".

Similarly, this was further supported by the manager of marketing department. He commented that:

> "...there is interrelationship between our external environments surrounding our company and the nature of leadership, and this relationship highlights the type of leadership competencies and the type of development programmes that best work with us".

Although leadership needs were seen as a result of analysing the environment surrounding Af-Ro Co, these needs were stemmed from the present jobs; and therefore, the purpose of LD was mostly temporary to overcome the present challenges facing Af-Ro Co, instead of being used for sustainable development goals. The Reception manager at Af-Ro Co stated:

> "The political, social, economic factors require a fully understanding for providing best service to customers by training employees and developing the leadership skills required; however, this does not target our future development because we work in an unstable environment, so we concern about what occurs today".

Stakeholders' feedback

At Af-Ro Co, leadership needs were completely identified by using feedback method that covered a wide set of individuals. First, Af-Ro Co was assessing its employees every six months by using questionnaire to collect information regarding company and managers' performance, employees’ needs, suggestions, and other critical issues. It was noted that because employees were communicating largely with customers daily; employees, therefore, had an active role for identifying the weaknesses. It had commented hopes on their feedback because they reflected an accurate picture of the hotel’s needs. In turn, LD did not target those employees in Af-Ro Co because their tasks and functions did not need such training. The finance manager stated:

> “Large companies cannot identify its requirements only by its top management because this level is not able to identify company’s needs without communicating with employees and workers...by their feedback, it can determine: 1) what to adopt and develop; 2) the nature of leadership that best work with the company”.

Moreover, attention was also paid to customers’ feedback because they are an effective part in data collection for understanding mistakes and deficiencies at Af-Ro Co. According to the reception manager, customers’ feedback reflected the true image of the company and staff performance, especially, particularly; customers did not fear the result of their participation in the evaluation, unlike hotel staff who were characterised by courtesies and flatteries of their feedback. Accordingly, he noted:

> “...customer feedback is characterized by credibility more than the staff feedback. This is because the staff members are committed or influenced by the directives of directors, as a result of cultural factors, but this does not apply to customers”.

The three instructors at Af-Ro who were responsible for training and development were the top managers, HR manager and the head office in Rotana Hotels’ group. The Environmental analysis and stakeholders’ feedback are evaluated by those instructors. In this regard, training requirements were continuously changing due to the instability in Af-Ro environment. Care must be taken not to exaggerate the degree of freedom given to top manager or in the area of HR in Af-Ro Company to identify the leadership needs due to a number of elements that acted to place limitations on how Af-Ro Company exercised this autonomy. For example, Af-Ro Company adopted differentiation strategy that restricted its development strategy and organisational culture within the scope of the parent company with some flexibility after 2011. Moreover, the head office had an active role with HR and top managers in Af-Ro Co to identify the type of training and development interventions required to implement. This was evident through the resources of LD adopted at Af-Ro. The reception manager stated:

> “Most our LD methods and activities are Western via the head office in Dubai. This occurs by HR department in the Hotel that evaluate our needs and the purposes required from each method when communicating with the head office in the mother company”.

It was found that the head office failed to identify the leadership needs in Af-Ro Co after Syria crisis; even after submitting the reports required every six months because it lacked a full understanding of Syrian environment that continuously changes after 2011. This required a clear decision for giving Af-Ro hotel the freedom to analyze its environmental forces from local perspective, as the worthiest to do this role without any external interference. In this regard, it was noted that the parent company was forced to grant Af-Ro a more flexible policy in terms of the training and development required. This included the development methods and their contents due to the constant and accelerated changes in the surrounding environment, which made it difficult to follow a clear strategy regarding the nature of its leadership development, as the assistant human resource manager illustrates:

> “despite of such issues as hospitality sector, large size hotel, adopting differentiation strategy, adopting the parent company's culture and its international development strategy confirming the strictness in training and development, we do not have a comprehensibly development strategy to tell you what we used after we worked in Syria in 2008. This is evident if we compare what we adopted before and after the political conflict in Syria. So our development strategy is characterised by its continuous changes when analysing political, economic, social issues. So this gave us an additional feature of the degree of freedom to act for meeting our exceptional challenges, but it is still restricted, as was mentioned at the beginning”.

Additionally, it was found that there were three instructors who were responsible for identifying leadership needs for development at Af-Ro in order to meet its individuals, jobs and environment’s requirements. It is noted that there were cooperation and consultations between the head office of Rotana Group from one side and the chairman and the vice chairman and HR manager, as the following quote illustrates by HR assistant manager:

> “HR department raises regular reports annually to the head office in the United Arab Emirates then they define the nature of training and development sessions that we need. after that they transfer the content of these sessions to the HR

> department then we discuss these programmes with managers at top management the chairman and his vice to define exactly what the content of training and development we need and the deal ways for their application, you must take into consideration that this may and may not be agreed 100% with the development strategy of the parent company , but we attempt to keep our training as we can within the same direction of the parent company development strategy, this does not include only training, but policy, culture, rules...etc".

Also, it was found that the key resources of LD at Af-Ro are distributed between local and Western resources. In this regard, Af-Ro utilises the local experience on business and management schools and utilises Western resources like any other companies belong to Rotana, which are commonly available in the internet, as the security manager illustrates:

> "Some development methods sometimes are suggested by our experts and we have our main resources, such as local business and management schools, but the methods that we adopt are mainly Western approved by the head office and are available on internet, such as European management centres, and management development journals".

It should be further noted that although Af-Ro adopted different types of leadership behaviours/capabilities or even development methods form its parent company, this did not mean that Af-Ro were ignoring development strategy of the parent company because it was still following the same rules, policies and culture that confirmed the need for training and development for all managers at three organisational levels. But there is no clear process explains how Af-Ro selects its people for training and development. In this regard, It was found that the top management that include the chairman and his vice has an important for identifying leadership need for development and are involved in training with the other managers in the middle management and operational levels, whereas the rest of employees were not targeted by leadership training and development plans because they lack the opportunity for career development. The HR manager stated the following:

> "Managers have opportunities for leadership career development, and thus they need to training in leadership.....targeting individuals who are not in leadership is wasting time and is really expensive to us when their development will not achieve any benefit to the hotel".

Additionally, it was noted that Af-Ro did not provide a clear picture about its leadership training and development approach because of two reasons: identifying leadership needs for development was based on meeting the challenges of the current job after Syria crisis, and it did not focus on specific concept of competencies. It was found that leadership behaviours and capabilities tend to be a combination of different concepts of behaviours and capabilities that target individuals' needs, jobs needs, and company requirements, rather than focusing on one concept of behaviours and capabilities that target either individuals' needs, jobs, or Af-Ro requirements.

> "I should say that our leadership needs are mainly targeting our internal and external challenges after Syrian war in particular. In addition to this, we have no time to focus or support specific needs and neglect the others. For this reason, our competencies in leadership are a set of competencies that targeting our business requirements, managers and their employees' needs, and the hotel challenges".

5.5. LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS AND CAPABILITIES

In considering the nature and the type of leadership behaviour and capabilities adopted at Af-Ro hotel, it was found that the behaviours and capabilities adopted before Syria crisis were: theoretical awareness of management, creativity, the ability to inspire, and the ability to self-learning by hospitality research and reading. In this regard, for example Food and leverage manager stated:

> "The ability to be creative, theoretical awareness of management, the ability to inspire, and the ability to self-learning by hospitality research and reading were general competencies into our long term plans in HRD strategies but the change of our environments led to adopt different competencies that serve current needs and have specific-focus".

However the behaviours and capabilities used before Syria's crisis were different from those that were adopted after the crisis, which are considered, in turn, below.

Table 5.2: Five vital leadership behaviours and capabilities required at Af-Ro Co

The Type of Leadership Behaviour and Capabilities Required
• Decision-making and solving problem

- Communication
- Adaptability
- Self-awareness
- Business skills

i. Decision-making and solving problem

Democratic leadership was the common behaviour at Af-Ro because it was applying the same policy and culture of the parent company. In this regard, it was found that the instability in Syrian market required from Af-Ro's staff fast responses to all situations in order to satisfy the customers. Furthermore, attention was paid to develop decision-making and solving-problem across all divisions and departments because the autocratic leadership was the common behaviour of some participants before they came to Af-Ro Co. The twelve participants confirmed that decision-making and solving problem were inseparable. For example, the manager of leisure and health division stated:

> "Problem solving and decision making are interrelated skills and inseparable not only in the top management, but in the other managerial levels...".

Accordingly, the degree of autonomy given to managers for decision-making and solving-problem was related to the nature of problem. In this regard, decision-making and problem-solving competencies were initially adopted at the operational level to provide fast service to customers but, if managers at this level failed to deal with the problem, decision-making or problem-solving would raise to those who were at higher level. This issue was evidently explained by the information technology manager as follow:

> "Leadership has become a shared role more than ever before, so providing a consistently high quality service to customers requires managers who have role for decision-making and solving problem from their managerial positions, but when the problem is difficult to solve or to make decision, it is transferred to those who are at higher position and so on.... we develop both competencies together based on recommendation from the head office last year after discussing this with our HR and top managers".

Similarly, the marketing manager linked the needs for decision-making and problem- solving and attracting customers. He noted:

> "The reason for adopting and developing these skills is that our customers expect best service from our hotel. In relation to our marketing division, we try to attract our guests by following all possible ways and this requires fast decision-making or solving problem in some situations, without going back to our strategic leadership level".

Additionally, differentiated services that were perceived as one of the pillars of the Af-Ro hotel manifested its features through participation in decision-making and problem-solving across all managerial positions. The assistant human resource manager noted:

> "...the ability to find solutions for all problems and the ability to make the right decisions are vital in our hotel's slogan in hospitality sector because we do not know what our guests may ask, what problems we may face, or what we expect from an unstable environment...".

ii. Communication

After 2011, it was found that communication became one of few competencies required at Af-Ro Co. The twelve participants confirmed that the communication was adopted to fill gap and reform the relationship among employees from one side, and between employees and managers from the other side because of the political and religious divisions within Syrian society, which cast a shadow over relationships inside the hotel. First, it was noted that employees at Af-Ro Co belong to different political parties and religions, so Af-Ro Co attempted to create friendship culture among employees, regardless of their political and religious orientations. Due to strong culture of Af-Ro Co, there were attempts to separate between job and the cultural backgrounds and beliefs of employees. This procedure was made before Syrian crisis, but after 2011, Af-Ro culture was characterised by its flexibility to reduce the aggressive tendency among employees. Second, the relationship between managers and employees was also governed by the religious and political orientations that required efforts to reinforce this relationship. In turn, this would reflect a good picture of the hotel. Consequently, adopting communication competency was to tackle three forms of challenges, as the reception manager at Af-Ro Co illustrates:

> "Communication is important competency for this hotel because our business environment requires reinforcing the relationship with all employees for facilitating tasks, improving the performance of the hotel and staff, and reducing the gap between managers and our employees. Thus, this type of competencies

> allows us understanding more details about this hotel and our employees when working close to them".

Furthermore, communication method altered from indirect communication between employees and managers to face-to-face communication after Syria crisis; and this change was attributed to the fact that the events surrounding Af-Ro Co increased the need for understanding their employees' needs to provide the best services to guests, in turn. The manager of employees' development department noted:

> "We are now forced to change our communication method with staff to become face-to-face because this would reflect positively on customers; however... I should say that our managers, before Syrian crisis, did not use face to face communication, but today it has become a reality as a result of the unstable business environment".

iii. Adaptability

Given that Syrian environment was characterised by its instability after 2011, Af-Ro Co made large efforts to meet this challenge by the changes required. It was noted that short-term purpose was the main characteristic of HRD activities for meeting the present job requirements, but this made the nature of HRD activities incomprehensible because of the fast change in its external environment. According to marketing manager, *"adopting long-term development strategy is currently questionable"*. In this regard, the twelve participants, except one, confirmed that the ability to adapt was perceived as one of the effective competencies in Af-Ro Co. First, the low level of guests at Af-Ro Co acted to place the head office and Af-Ro hotel under pressure because most managers with long experience and high-skilled managers in the hotel industry left Af-Ro hotel. As a result, Af-Ro Co based on a recommendation from the head office was announcing for new vacancies continuously, this required, in turn, supporting the ability to adapt in order to help new staff to adapt to Af-Ro culture and policy. The reception manager stated:

> "There is no loyalty to this hotel, so we announce for new vacancies continuously to fill some vacant positions, so we mostly note that the successful applicants fail to ignore their previous companies' culture, and adapt to our culture in this hotel. This is a real challenge to us, so we adopt the ability to adapt in this hotel, which includes new strategies, development methods, new skills...etc".

Additionally, the ability to adapt helped Af-Ro Co create harmony between individuals' needs, hotels requirements, and jobs requirements. The three elements in this triangulation were perceived as the engine of Af-Ro Co and had an equal importance. The HR manager observed:

> "The ability to adapt is a critical competency in Syrian market for understanding the situations inside and outside this hotel in order to connect them together around one direction and one solution....".

iv. Self-awareness

As mentioned earlier, Af-Ro Co focused on short-term plans for leadership training and development for present job to meet its environment. However, short-term training did not have such positive influence on managers. This was attributed to the fact that there is no time to learn from short-term strategies. This required an alternative solution by adopting self-awareness competency at Af-Ro Co. Accordingly, this helped Af-Ro managers to follow their self-weaknesses to tackle by self-learning. The finance manager illustrated evidently:

> "Because of Syria crisis... This is the reason for using leadership skills and ability for a short time. But, our short-term strategy does not achieve the desired result for the future development. As a result, this hotel supports adopting self-awareness to understand our own leadership weaknesses because this would help managers meet their training needs via self-development method either by on-job training and off-training".

However, before 2011, self-awareness was not used, but the low level of guests affected on the annual income and the development budget. In this regard, supporting self-awareness was as a result of the lack of development budget that affected on the nature and the purpose of leadership training. At the same time, adopting self-awareness was an introduction to promote for self-learning to reduce the pressure on Af-Ro Co. The marketing manager stated:

> "We are confused about the nature of training and development required because of the fast change in our business environment. We are encouraged to understand our weaknesses to work on this individually by off-job training, such as reading about the theory of leadership in academic books and articles".

Similarly, the manager of employees' development department highlighted the importance of self-awareness competency at Af-Ro Co after a period of prosperity and sufficiency that overshadowed on the company regarding training and development that ended since the outbreak of violence in the country in 2011. She stated:

> “....this hotel is not able to target all leaders’ requirements for their future development; this competency helps them understand what they should do, so this hotel gives us an opportunity to look at our own needs by self-development”.

v. Business skills

Given that Af-Ro Co should be ready for all circumstances in its business environment, it is noted that business skills must be up-to-date, but after the civil war in 2011, attention was paid to business skills due to the link between business skills and the change of business environment. Six participants of twelve in Af-Ro Co linked between business skills and leadership training. For example, Af-Ro Co attached importance for developing French and English language skills, computer-training and technical skills that fit the shared leadership adopted in this hotel. According to food and beverage and vice chairman manager, all managerial team members had the same business skills, so there was no a need for asking others to complete tasks. He observed:

> “Technical assistance and training on the use of computers and the French language and the English language in the hospitality industry are common in our hotel. I can say that we learn the skills required in our shared leadership....For example, each manager should be able to translate any message posted by travel agencies; and therefore we do not prefer to ask others to do the job and then bring back the message to us after translation. Definitely, such business skills would avoid bureaucratic management”.

It should be noted that business skills at Af-Ro Co tend to be specific skills. For example, French and English vocabularies used in hospitality and hotel sector were not the same in other sectors. Additionally, technical skills specialised in hospitality and hotels were different from other business sectors. It was found that business skills used in Af-Ro Co had the same name in other sectors, but they different in purposes and this was correlated with the type of business and sector of each company. This was explained by the marketing manager that noted the following:

> “Business skills in this hotel are completely different from other business companies because the role of our divisors and departments reflects the type of

our business, so hospitality business skills are different from oil sector. This is a sample example to summarize why business skills are different despite they may have the same names, such as technical, computer, software...etc”.

5.6. CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCE ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section examines the influencing factors to LD in Af-Ro Co under the context's umbrella. This includes an examination of the following areas: competitive strategy, company sector, technology, company size, international strategy, organisational culture, and national culture. The chapter five discuss contextual influence on LD in the chapter seven to overcome the word count problem that will be summarized in table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Contextual influences on leadership development at Af-Ro

	Af-Ro
Competitive strategy	• Differentiation strategy
Company sector	• Business type: hospitality and hotel
Company size	• Large numbers of employees • Organisational structure
International strategy	• Balanced international strategy
Organisational culture	• Balanced organisational culture
Technology	• Poor technology infrastructure • Challenges in technology use
National culture aspects	• Religion • Gender • Wasta • Political and economic sanctions

5.7. CONCLUSION

The Af-Ro case study described in this chapter demonstrated that LD was connected with the internal and external environment requirements. This included selecting the leadership behaviours/capabilities required; their development methods that best work with Af-Ro Co and according to its available potentials. With regard to identifying leadership needs, it was handled by understanding of requirements of the internal and external environments that helped determine what best fit the company. As regards context for the application of leadership development, as in the two other case-study organisations, it was found that there were short-term and long-term barriers to leadership development. At the same time, these factors were seen as factors that affect the application of leadership development, and factors as determinants of leadership development.

It was found that LD at Af-Ro Co targeted only present job through the following:

- Adopting and developing communication competency to fill gap between employees and managers after the political conflicts that altered later to religious conflicts;
- The introduction of a policy of internal and external rotation by using job rotation activity as a means for developing communication skills;
- Adopting and developing decision-making and solving problem to meet the customers' needs by a high-level performance by using shared leadership in this regard;
- Paying attention to business skills because of its link with business environment change; and shared leadership used at Af-Ro Co requires developing business skills to avoid traditional tasks attached with the traditional management. Business skills, for the low managerial levels and the top managerial level, are required;
- The introduction of a policy of learning from experience by using action learning activity for developing decision-making, solving-problem, and business skills due to its effectiveness in the current environment surrounding Af-Ro Co;
- Adopting and developing the ability to adapt to all changes that take place in Syrian environments due to the lack of stability that requires fast adaptation to all situations;
- Adopting and developing self-awareness competency in order to provide managers the ability to understand their own requirements via this competency because Af-Ro Co is not able on targeting the future development of managers, therefore, it supports strongly self-development methods as a mean for developing managers based on the own requirements;
- The introduction of a policy of learning from assessment by using feedback method for developing self-awareness, the ability to adapt, and identifying leadership needs through gathering a large amount of information collected from employees, managers, customers, and interests in order to have a big picture about its requirements.

It was found that the leadership behaviour/capabilities adopted were best fit the current Af-Ro environment, also adopting only three development methods for developing the previous behaviours/capabilities required was due to their characteristics: first, these methods were characterised by their low cost that fit the available potentials at Af-Ro Co, particularly, after Syrian crisis that had impact on the annual income in general and the development budget in particular. Second, the development methods were continuously changing for meeting environment requirements, but the development methods used in Af-Ro Co worked better in its an unstable environment.

Moreover, identifying leadership needs at Af-Ro Co took place by understanding the surrounding environment. This helped determine the nature of behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods; in turn, assessing internal and external stakeholders served to provide rich information about the weaknesses of managers and Af-Ro performance. Furthermore, it was found a dynamic relationship between the perceived need for leadership and internal and external context, which was the basis for understanding the LD required at Af-Ro Co.

In relation to context, there were temporary and permanent factors, in general, affecting LD at Af-Ro Co after Syrian war in 2011. More specifically, it was found that these factors were perceived as factors had impacts on the application of leadership development, and determinant factors of LD in Af-Ro Co.

With regards to the determinants of leadership development, competitive strategy, the size of Af-Ro Co, its sector, its international strategy, and organisational culture were the essence of determinants of LD at Af-Ro Co. First, it was found that differentiation strategy adopted at AF-Ro Co supported leadership training and development for high-skilled staff in managerial positions. Second, a large number of employees increased managers' roles and responsibilities across managerial positions, which required a continuous training for completing their managerial tasks successfully. Third, it was found that a five-star Af-Ro hotel that belongs to hospitality and hotel sector required high-skilled managers for providing a high-quality service; otherwise the lack of high-skilled managers would affect the hotel performance and its reputation. Forth, although international strategy and organisational culture were characterised by the flexibility after 2011, Af-Ro Co adopted balanced international strategy and organisational culture that support leadership training and development for the long-term purposes, but with implementing strict policy, and rules of Rotana Hotel Group.

In relation to factors influencing leadership development, these factors were seen as permanent factors and even before Syria crisis in 2011. With regard to technology, the infrastructure of technology in the country in which Af-Ro operates was seen as real challenges for facilitating leadership training at Af-Ro Co; however, Syrian government attempted to support technology, these attempts were still shy and this was reflected on business companies working in Syrian market including Af-Ro Co. Additionally, it was found that there was difference between managers in terms of their interest of technology use, and this in turn, had a clear influence of their leadership training at Af-Ro Co.

In national cultural factors, first, it was found that selecting individuals for managerial positions was controlled by Wasta despite of the fact they lacked the experience and talent required, but Af-Ro gained benefits from those people selected by Wasta through their relationship with governments. Second, the national values and the culture of resistance against the Western governments were the key reasons of the Western sanctions Syrians and companies operating in Syria, and this included Af-Ro Co. The outcome of the sanctions was clearly reflected on leadership training and development because of visa problems and difficulties for attending external training and due to the lack of foreign guests that affected the development budget in Af-Ro Co. Third, linking gender issues with habits, social rules, religion, or family responsibilities at Af-Ro Co was the reason beyond the lack of women opportunity for career development and external trainings. However, it was found that they had leadership talents more than several men managers at Af-Ro Co. This had impacts on the effective application of leadership training because some men did not work hard to develop their managerial skills. Forth, many experts and managers refused working in environment that did not respect Islamic Sharia, so many experts moved to work in other companies abroad, and this created gap between seeking for managers with experience and new experts from one side and the application of leadership training and development from the other side.

CHAPTER SIX: S-TEL CO

6.1. INTROPDUCTION

Chapter six reports the third case study, which is a privately owned telecommunications company classified as a domestic company. This chapter follows broadly the same the format used by the previous chapters. In the first section, information is provided on S-Tel company. The next section then details the findings obtained from the case by considering, in turn, the application of LD in respect of the following issues: leadership behaviours/capabilities; LD methods; identifying leadership needs for development, and contextual influences on LD. Finally, a concluding section draws together the key points emerging from the case study.

6.2. COMPANY CONTEXT

Syriatel (S-Tel Co) as a mobile telecommunication company started in 2000 and since this time, S-Tel had been leading the Syrian mobile telecommunication market. The agreement between Drex Technologies S.A. and Orascom Telecom Holding S.A.E. – Egypt in the year 2000 was the basis for establishing Syriatel, which was the first operator of the cellular telephone network in Syria. In this regard, the investment agreement that included the three Build–Operate–Transfer stages was signed on 12 February 2001 between Drex Technologies S.A and Orascom Telecom Holding S.A.E. on one hand, and the Syrian Telecommunications Establishment, on the other hand, to build a cellular communication network "GSM". Accordingly, the company was established that included two phases: In the trial project phase, it was agreed that the company built and operated the cellular communication network at its own expense without any charge to the Syrian Telecommunications Establishment and all revenue would belong to the Syrian Telecommunications Establishment up to February 13, 2001 the date at which the trial project ended. February 14, 2001 was the date at which the permanent project started where the company obtained its commencement order from the Syrian Telecommunications Establishment. In this regard, the company's registration procedures were completed on June 29, 2002 as a Société Anonyme company No. 5141 with its headquarters in the rural area of Damascus – Daria – in the Syrian Arab Republic.

In regards to the company ownership, individuals own around 30% of the company and 70% of the company was owned by different companies and investment funds. In this regard, Al-Mashreq Investment Fund was a major shareholder and a member of the board of directors and Syriatel's parent company. This fund had positively reflected on Syrian society and economy alike, which was evident by establishing and running successful corporations in several sectors across the country.

S-Tel Co, which includes 2000 skilled employees, attempted to create an environment of mutual respect, encouragement, teamwork, an equal opportunity for employment, team spirit, excellence, and development due to S-Tel's values.

6.3. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

This section examines the LD methods that applied at S-Tel Co, and their contents. LD interventions at S-Tel Co were changing because of its unstable environment after Syria crisis.

LD methods/activities are implemented by learning from classroom and practice. In this regard, it should be noted that four development methods were adopted since the company operated are: feedback, internal job rotation, job assignment, and case study. For example, the manager of managing and governance relationship unit stated:

> "We have adopted different LD methods since we operated and the most important methods were: case study, job assignment, feedback, and internal job rotation, as I said, these methods have changed because of the change of market direction after the instability in Syria".

However, the company attempted to adapt to the instability by adopting additional methods, except feedback that was already used since it operated in 2001. The methods were coaching, action learning, and feedback for developing the leadership behaviours/capabilities required. The Procurement manager noted:

> "Our development methods and activities used currently in Syriatel are: Action learning, coaching, and 360-degree feedback; .... Well, these methods and activities are best used to develop our leadership needs, especially, for present tasks and responsibilities".

Additionally, it was found that S-Tel Co adopted three methods for two reasons: They worked effectively with Syrian context that was characterised by its volatile business environment after 2011. Also, political and religious conflicts had impacts on S-Tel Co after boycotting the company because of its support to Syrian government. Accordingly, achieving the results required at lowest cost was taken into consideration by adopting specific development methods for specific purposes. The marketing manager stated the following:

> "....feedback methods, action learning, and coaching are best fit our requirements in order to develop our leadership needs because of offering the best outcomes at lowest cost in this company and because not all development methods have similar outcome, some of them are ineffective in our circumstances; while others work effectively".

Table: 6.1: Three development methods and activities applied at S-Tel Co

Development methods and activities	Purposes
• Action learning	• Communication • Business skills
• Coaching	• Teamwork
• Feedback	• Strategic thinking

i. Action learning

Although action learning was characterised as an informal activity, it was used as a formal activity at S-Tel. Most of the twelve participants confirmed that action learning was used for developing communication competency after its application in 2011, as the sales manager at S-Tel Co illustrates:

> "Action learning is effectively used in Syriatel for being a basic activity into leadership development.... but we use it for developing communication skills in practical through events, assignments, projects, also each manager learns from those who are at higher level, which is the essence for developing communication competency via learning from experience into all forms of learning process".

It seemed that this process helped to improve communication competency by repeating daily tasks, projects, assignments and regular meetings, and when communicating with others. More generally, today's business rejected traditional management and preferred shard management style that required high-skilled staff in most forms of communication. Accordingly, S-Tel Co attempted to spread communication culture among managers in most managerial levels. It attributed this attitude to the belief that learning from other managers with long experience when they communicate daily and repeat meetings. This helped to develop the personal communication skills required in service sector. The manager of managing and governance relationship unit stated:

> "Today's business does not support individual leadership, but shared leadership is more common for successful business and using good language that affects followers to be active. In turn, action learning is an effective way for developing communication by imitating other managers who with long experience in communication".

This point was further reinforced by the administration manager who stated:

> "Action learning is the most effective activity for developing communication because our experts mostly are people from different managerial positions during seminars and projects. So, when communicating managers from all managerial positions together, this help to exchange their knowledge and experience in regards to the communication skills required in daily jobs, crises, projects, tasks, and even with customers. Thus, this allows us to build good experience regarding the communication skills that we should use based on each situation".

However, action learning was also used for developing business skills at S-Tel Co. Seven participants confirmed that action learning activity is specifically used to facilitate learning, improve, and develop skills specialised for procurement, sales, technical, marketing, quality, and customers service divisions. For example, the sales manager highlighted the role of action learning for developing and adjusting the sales skills required in S-Tel Co. He stated:

> "We support strongly action learning for developing all sales skills in our department because repeating doing tasks and learning from previous mistakes allow us build our experience with regard to what work with us and what does not, so our division requires sales skills in telecom sector in order to increase the company income and reputation, such as convincing customers in our services and performance. All this takes place by learning daily from either mistakes or repeating tasks to understand what is effective and what is not".

Moreover, it was found that the process of action learning activities served to improve the quality skills that formed the basis for understanding the weaknesses, especially, the business strategy used at S-Tel Co and its culture focused strongly on the quality of services. The head of quality department indicated:

> "We use action learning for developing quality skills through learning from meetings, discussions, reflection, mistakes, personal discovery when empowering our staff to take responsibility for meeting internal and external weaknesses. By this way, action learning serves to improve skills such as, measuring the degree of mistakes, evaluating the effectiveness and performance, comparing the performance of all departments and divisions to draw a clear picture about the quality level of the entire company".

ii. Coaching

Coaching was the second development method utilised at S-Tel Co that targeted managers across operational, middle management and top levels. Most of the twelve participants confirmed that coaching activity was adopted to develop teamwork competency due to Syria crisis that required more consultations and teamwork to complete tasks effectively. Coaching at S-Tel Company was implemented by two goal-focused ways. First, group leaning targeted all managerial levels except the strategic level conducted by external and internal experts and managers with long experience. Second, one-to-one learning targeted strategic level conducted by external experts for short-term courses. The HR manager stated:

> "This method targets all leadership levels, but with differences in its application. For example, we have two kinds of coaching methods: the first targets only top management level individually, and the other one targeting the rest of the leadership levels collectively... so coaching method is very good method for building effective teamwork that we support in Syriatel's values because we did not learn to work in team before we came to this company; yet again, learning from other experience teamwork skills takes place effectively when working with leaders and expert who are at higher leadership levels".

Similarly, it was found that coaching method helped participants at S-Tel Co learn how to develop teamwork skills via managers with long experience and experts that provided theoretical and practical knowledge to the participants at S-Tel Co regarding previous events, challenges, and other companies' experience in HRD. This allowed building the participants' experience by creating a positive environment for creativity in teamwork. It was noted that learning from the experts and some managers helped participants at S-Tel Co to compare what they learnt from their coaches and what should be done collectively in a volatile environment requiring a collective work to ensure the success of S-Tel Co. The head of quality department highlighted the role of coaching method for transferring the knowledge required to the participants. He stated:

> "Such activity helps developing the ability to learn and work with team members when communicating with coaches who have previous experience, so participants can draw conclusions from their experiences that can be translated by different ways, such as telling stories about previous challenges and problem and how have been solved, completing tasks collectively, sharing ideas, exchanging suggestions among participants in classroom or daily job; we know that anyone when hears something about interesting subjects by their coaches, a person will have a clear reaction for doing the same thing, this is actually the secret of learning, so learning and developing teamwork skills take place by coaching method".

The procurement manager linked between the reason of using coaching method for developing teamwork competency after 2011 and S-Tel environment, and highlighted the role of coaching for developing a specific competency. He stated:

> "This method was used since we worked in S-Tel Co in 2001, but it has diverse purposes. For now, the purpose of implementing coaching method in all its forms was to develop teamwork skills after increasing the violence targeting our company and its staff due to instability in our surrounding environment".

iii. Feedback

Feedback was another developmental method applied at S-Tel Co since it operated in 2001. The twelve participants agreed that feedback was an effective method at S-Tel Co for two reasons. First it provided rich data about the weaknesses and strengths of S-Tel Co by targeting both employees and customers, and this highlighted their requirements and how they perceived the company and its managers, as the manager of planning unit stated:

> "Feedback is a vital method into our managerial training and development due to its role for providing rich details on our leadership needs, improving empowerment of all managers, identifying the weaknesses and strengths and developing the leadership skills required".

Most of the twelve participants confirmed that feedback was adopted for developing strategic thinking competency at S-Tel Co at strategic and middle management levels. It was found that S-Tel Co developed analytical skills of its managers to predict future problem in order to tackle any unpredicted challenges. Developing strategic thinking via feedback method took place through the regularly collected data, especially; the rich data helped managers understand the requirements of the internal and external environments. The HR manager noted:

> "...this method highlights the weaknesses that target our company performance, tasks, and manager's performance; thus, this enables us to improve our ability to analyse when we analyse rich data collected from different directions. The opportunity provided by this kind of assessment contributes to increase our skills for analysing our internal and external environment to build our leadership needs on it. You know leadership needs are identified in unstable country to which we belong, so we need analytical skills at all leadership levels if we want to be active managers rather than being passive managers. So, feedback method is an effective method for developing strategic thinking competency".

The finance manager that highlighted linked between the creativity and innovation of each manager and the ability to analyse. He stated:

> "feedback method helps develop our analytical skills through the creativity and innovation raised when assessing the huge amount of information; thus doing this task regularly allows us improving our analytical skills and providing critical opinions and ideas for future, such as evaluating employees' needs, customers' needs, performance, quality of our services and predicting future challenges according to this analysis".

Furthermore, feedback method was used at S-Tel Co for developing different purposes, but the permanent purpose was to focus on identifying leadership needs. The Sales Manager stated:

> "Feedback is critical development method that helps improve different competencies, but we are currently using this method for developing analytical skills, which is the first step toward improving performance......At the same time, the main purpose of this method is to understand our leadership needs".

6.4. IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Leadership needs were characterised by their exceptional needs at S-Tel Co to fit its surrounding environment after the launch of the spark of the Syrian crisis in 2011. This section examined the process of identifying leadership needs in S-Tel Co. In this regard, it was found that S-Tel were utilising two tactics to identifying leadership needs for development: environmental analysis, and stakeholders' feedback, which are considered below.

Environmental analysis

It is found there is a strong relation between identifying leadership needs for development and internal and external environment through which it can draw the form of LD adopted, as the following quote illustrates by the manager of managing and governance relationship unit:

> "There is a correlation between understanding leadership needs and internal and external environmental forces and other determinants by which it can identify the leadership competencies and the development programmes required because when linking such issues together, It is easy to define what development programmes that are needed to develop the leadership competencies required".

The findings reveal that S-Tel at the macro level analysed its environmental factors such as economic, political, technological, and social environments, which were going through drastic change because of Syria's crisis. This type of analysis helped to identify the company's weaknesses and its threats as well as the leadership needs required for such a period. Similarly, at meso level, S-Tel analysed its competitors, customers, suppliers. At the micro level, its analysis involved most the internal organisational functions to understand the internal weaknesses and requirements and to identify HRD practices, which included the leadership behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods, as the following quotes illustrates:

> "...we have assessment of our environmental forces that are taken into an account when looking at the subject of HRD in our company because the political and economic stability, the strong infrastructure of technology, and learning from other competitors' experience would help us plan well and adopt what we need..." (Technical manager).

> “We analyse our internal environment with emphasises on internal functions to understand the weaknesses. Also, we scan our external environment that includes such issues as politic and economic issues and competitors in other companies in Syrian market to define whether we can adopt the same practices and there is any opportunity to modify their practice in Syriatel. This allows us drawing big picture about our leadership needs in Syriatel Company because we are a part of our surrounding environment, so if we don’t care about our environment, we may lose our market, according to this theory we identify our leadership needs” (Sales manager).

Additionally, it was found that environmental analysis target short-term purposes for two reasons. First, the financial potentials of S-Tel Co failed to support its LD for long-term purposes because of the change of market direction. Second, adopting a long-term development strategy did not support leadership needs at S-Tel Co due to the instability that required temporary leadership behaviours/capabilities at S-Tel Co in order to meet its present jobs. The customers’ service manager noted:

> “Our company focuses on both internal and external ingredients that include market, politic, economic, social stability...etc through which we define our leadership needs, but these needs are linked with the rapid changes in our environment, which required us focusing on the present challenges..... and we do not have funding to support long-terms development”.

Stakeholders’ feedback

In addition to above, eleven participants of the twelve participants indicated that S-Tel Co used questionnaire for identifying its leadership needs. This questionnaire targeted a wide set of stakeholders at S-Tel Co. First, it was found that S-Tel Co analysed its employees’ feedback as an active part for understanding the weaknesses and strengths in order to make sense of the leadership needs. In this regard, S-Tel Co believed that employees could provide a critical feedback regarding their managers’ performance. Second, attention was also paid to customers’ feedback due to its effective role for understanding the weaknesses and strengths in the company in regards to managers and company performance. This was evident by the differentiation strategy implemented at S-Tel Co that paid attention to customers’ impressions and their needs. The technical manager noted:

> "Syriatel Company makes a regular assessment every three months to evaluate the employees and customers' requirements. So this assessment serves to help us understand leadership needs to meet their requirements because there is strong relationship between employees and customers of the Syriatel Company and the leadership needs, acting as parts of our environment that provide a clear picture about our leadership".

More specifically, it was noted that attention paid to internal and external stakeholders, acting as active factors in creating meaning at S-Tel Co for three reasons. First, it was found that supporting employees' feedback was due to their daily relationship with customers, which provided rich data about customers' requirements in order to gain their satisfaction. This was a real evidence for supporting leadership needs. Second, S-Tel Co relied on its customers' feedback, and attributed this to the fact that they had the ability to criticism without fear or hesitation, which reflected also a real picture about the company, employees, and managers' performance. Third, S-Tel Co adopting differentiation strategy worked hard to provide a high-level performance by a highly-skilled staff, as the marketing manager in S-Tel Co illustrates:

> "We use a regular questionnaire targeting our stakeholders because of being active parts in our company. Indeed, because our differentiation strategy attempts to provide a highly skilled staff, it supports stakeholders' feedback used for identifying leadership needs in our company. Also, our customers provide us serious and real criticism about the entire company; in turn, our employees are best to understand our customers' requirement because of their daily communication. As a result, the interactions among these issues are managed to be the second phase into our assessment process to determine our leadership needs".

Furthermore, it was found that S-Tel Co supported stakeholders' feedback, acting as a global standard in business world for understanding the weaknesses from the perspective of stakeholders to identify leadership needs. In this regard, for instance, the HR manager stated:

> "An understanding of human resource development in general, and leadership needs in particular in business world rely on tracking global criteria adopted in business today, regardless, the type of company or its nationality because business world to which S-Tel Co belongs has become a small village".

Additionally, it should be noted that the major instructors for adopting HRD activities at S-Tel were the top leadership and HR department after evaluating the environmental analysis and stakeholders' feedback, which was the major responsibility at S-Tel. This is followed by a full report and recommendations transferred to those who were at the top leadership, as the following quote illustrates:

> "HR department is responsible for all HRD issues, after each assessment, there is a full report submitted to the top leaders" (information systems manager).

> "We depend on our HR department experts and top leadership who instruct to adopt leadership competencies and their development methods" (Administration manager).

It was found that HR department in association with top leadership utilised Western knowledge regarding leadership training/development, as HR manager stated:

> "LD studies are global knowledge used and applied by the West then transferred to our countries".

Information systems manager linked between the Western management resources and the experts at S-Tel who had experience with global companies using also Western resources. He stated:

> "We rely on our experts who have very long experience in Europe and America companies operating their business in Gulf countries".

However, the company did not provide a clear process that helps to explain how individuals are selected for leadership training, most LD methods are targeting managers across operational, middle management and top management, but such training and development do not target individuals who do not have managerial role, as the following quotes illustrates:

> "Leaders are involved in leadership training because targeting others in these kinds of training and development will cost the company more money and time for nothing because it is not used for non-leadership functions" (information systems manager).

> "Every leader and manager in this company across all leadership positions are involved in leadership training because they are best people who need such

> training and development, particularly, managers and leaders in a company are the engine for company development and HR development" (HR manager).

Furthermore, it was noted that LD approach included general concepts of leadership behaviours and capabilities. It was found that leadership behaviours/capabilities at S-Tel targeted S-Tel staff, its business requirements, the challenges of the company's requirements, so there was no attention to a specific concept within its leadership training since it was operated in 2001, but it was found that the emphasis was always a combination of different concepts of leadership behaviours/capabilities that targeted current requirements internal and external requirements of S-Tel. HR manager stated:

> "I cannot go through all competencies because of their variety since we operated, for current competencies, they have similar purposes with those that we had, but with more emphasis on short-term needs, so our competencies are to meet challenges and requirements of three factors: our managers/employees, our services, and external challenges of S-Tel. So our competencies must focus on all these factors to be effective because we cannot ignore one part of these factors".

6.5. LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOURS AND CAPABILITIES

With regard to the nature of leadership behaviour/capabilities utilised at S-Tel Co, it should be noted that wide set of behaviours and capabilities were adopted since the company operated in 2001. The HR manager stated:

> "We cannot go through all skills we have adopted since we operated because of their variety, but their purposes were to meet challenges and developmental purposes, but now they are used for meeting specific problem to maintain a company in the right direction".

However, violence and conflicts that took place in the environment of S-Tel Co led to adopt and develop specific leadership behaviours/capabilities to be able to meet its environment challenges. Four behaviours/capabilities were adopted into LD plans at S-Tel as listed in table 6.2 and discussed below. The four behaviours/capabilities adopted since 2011 tend to target specific purposes relevant to the challenges surrounding the company after Syria's crisis, and thus they may have solving-problems characteristic rather than developmental purposes in the last three years.

Table 6.2: Four vital leadership behaviours and capabilities emerging at S-Tel Co

The Type of Leadership Behaviour/Capabilities Required
• Communication • Business skills • Teamwork • Strategic thinking

i. Strategic thinking

Given that Syria crisis affected companies working in Syria due to the instability, S-Tel Co attempted to empower its managers to be more active within the terrible conditions taking place in Syria. Most of the twelve participants agreed that S-Tel Co adopted strategic thinking competency for all managers across its managerial levels. S-Tel Co believed that managers must have the ability to analyze the company environment for understanding its weaknesses, strengths, opportunities, and challenges; and this competency, in turn, reflected the level of effectiveness of each manager, as the Sales manager observed:

> "Our company develops this competency because it supports the idea that effective leaders are those who predict the company future or who have strategic solutions in crises by strong analytical skills, such as evaluation, critical thinking, innovation for each situation, so leaders should have the ability to be positive though accomplishments".

Similarly, S-Tel Co adopted this competency to help its managers to acquire the capability to do multiple roles effectively within the lack of loyalty due to the civil war. Therefore, S-Tel Co attempted to support its managers by strategic leadership roles as a kind of motivation for career development; particularly, managers were continuously leaving the company because they did not agree with the political affiliation of the company. Consequently, strategic thinking was adopted across all managerial levels to avoid a leadership vacuum due to lack of loyalty. The information system manager noted:

> "The ability to have creative analysis, strategic vision and thinking are required because such ability helps a company have very professional and expert leaders who may have multi functions in leadership, such as coach, expert, in addition to the main career function".

Moreover, it should be noted that developing strategic thinking competency, in specific, was relevant to the culture of S-Tel Co that encouraged its managers to be creative and innovative for providing best solutions for future challenges, thinking, analyzing, and reading all scenarios from strategic perspective. The HR manager stated:

> "The culture of Syriatel Co. believes that managers must have the ability to analyse strategically the organisational structure, quality, market, employees' performance; also, these skills are included in our leadership development, so it is targeted today in our training programmes".

ii. Communication

Communication competency was utilised for operational, middle management and top management levels for two reasons including operational levels. First, managers in that level must have high communication skills to provide a high-quality service to customers; second, this had influence on S-Tel Co.'s reputation in the market, as the following quote by administration manager illustrates:

> "The main competencies that we support are listening to others, dialogue with others, speech skills, and the ability to convince others. Because our company is characterised as telecommunication sector, which spends long time with customers, communication competency is very important to understand our customers' requirements in order to achieve our competitive strategy, and also they are required inside the company in all managerial levels to reduce the gap between leaders that manifested its importance in our managerial levels after Syria crisis".

More specifically, the civil war moved to the heart of the company after 2011, but this crisis was not visible to many people inside and outside the company. Therefore, S-Tel Co attempted to improve the relationship between staff, as a means to avoid all forms of political and religious conflicts inside the company by adopting communication competency. The head of quality department observed:

> "We adopt communication skills to fill gaps between employees and managers who are from different political and religious backgrounds, so these skills are required for linking different views and opinions. Leaders cannot work individually in specific department or in the whole company, thus managers need

> to work with followers, colleagues, external stakeholders and others, so communication is very important for external relationship because it reflects the internal relationship inside the company".

This point was further supported by the customers' service manager who stated:

> "...our managers in all levels should be able to communicate with all individuals horizontally and vertically because this kind of competencies tends to be vital for current business in terms of leaders-followers relationship and company people-customers relationship...".

Similarly, the manager of planning unit linked between the shared leadership used at S-Tel Co and communication competency. He stated:

> "Communication is critical competency in our company.... Let me give an example, today traditional management is not used because using this approach leads companies to decline, so managers across all positions must respect others and must show high level of respect by using diplomatic language and strong sound that reflect the situations in speech...etc".

iii. Teamwork

Teamwork was not seen as a vital and effective competency before 2011 because managers did not work under pressure and their company environment did not require exceptional steps and intensive teamwork. However, the twelve participants confirmed that teamwork competency became essential in S-Tel Co after 2011. First, the rapid change in the environment surrounding S-Tel Co required quick responses to meet the external changes with sharing ideas, suggestions, and conceptions to provide effective solutions collectively made, so learning from team members, accepting criticism, and positive judgement formed the basis for the ability to work in team. The Finance manager noted:

> "This company supports completing tasks in teamwork, learning by teamwork, and exchanging ideas by teamwork. Also, teamwork is not supported in our society.... Because Syriantel is domestic company, it is supporting this new culture for Syrian managers".

The manager of managing and governance relationship unit emphasised the importance of teamwork for achieving the results required collectively by exchanging knowledge among team members who probably had divergent experiences. He stated:

> "This ability allows us learning from each other when exchanging our ideas as well as achieving our company objectives collectively, criticising other team members' ideas through constructive criticism ..... All these issues can work effectively when team members sharing their experience to complete on assignment".

Second, it was noted that most employees and managers working in S-Tel Co were local people; and working or learning collectively was not supported by educational system in Syria. In this regard, S-Tel Co recognised that although Syrian society was group oriented, it ignored the idea of team because it believed in individual efforts. In relation to this point, for instance, the Procurement manager observed the following:

> "This competency is new culture for our people in this company because our country has not encouraged us for collective works since we were students, right?, so this company attempts to generalise the collective culture in workplace and training by supporting the ability to work in teamwork, acting as a means for learning and exchanging experience with others".

Moreover, the implications for adopting teamwork competency on S-Tel Co were evident after the political and religious conflicts that influenced employees and managers inside S-Tel Co. The marketing manager observed:

> "This competency is very important nowadays because of the Syrian crisis, which requires sharing ideas learning from others: experts, top managers, coaches, colleagues for learning faster and doing tasks on time; do not forget, we do not have the same abilities and experience, so learning and working in teamwork have very good result on our performance".

iv. Business skills

Given that S-Tel Co was categorised under to telecommunication sector, it was found that business skills supported by S-Tel Co helped to improve the performance of the entire company in general and each department individually in particular. Seven participants confirmed that their divisions and departments required specific skills to accomplish the role required, as the HR manager stated:

> "Our business skills... are relevant to telecommunication sector, such as communication software for customers' service and other technical tools, vocabularies used in telecommunication world. Also they involve skills related to specific functional areas with regard to security division, financial division, sales, quality, sales ...etc. each of those requires their own skills that serve each division in order to complete its task successfully, which are called eventually business skills".

More specifically, the sales manager supported the HR manager and highlighted the nature of business skills required in the sales division for providing customers a high-level of services. He stated:

> "For our department, we learn and develop our Sales skills because you know Telecom Company should sale its services in a high-level performance within competitive competitors, such as the ability to convince, being patience with customer, friendly, which are sales skills belongs to Syriatel".

Similarly, the technical manager highlighted the technical skills that were needed for his department and the entire company. He stated:

> "Because Syriatel is Telecom Company, we seek to use new technology to update our equipment, thus the ability to understand technology equipment to help others learn on it is the main skill in this department, this includes all financial, sales, communication network, HRD software; so all managers should learn technology skills".

Additionally, the marketing division supported the technical and sales divisions in that marketing division had its own business skills that included marketing skills at S-Tel Co. Although marketing division adopted the same leadership behaviour/capabilities required for the managers across all divisions, marketing skills were the key introducing the tasks and responsibilities of marketing division at S-Tel Co. In this regard, for instance, the marketing manager observed the following:

"marketing skills in telecom sector is our priority in the marketing division because understanding the market and its requirements, other competitors, customers requirements, and what can satisfy them form the main business skills of our department in Syriatel; and these skills are absolutely different from marketing department in other business companies because the type of our business and sector is essence of these skills".

6.6. CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCE ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section addressed the influencing factors to LD in S-Tel Co under the umbrella of the context. This included an examination of the environmental factors in the following areas: competitive strategy, company sector, technology, company size, international strategy, organisational culture, and national culture. The chapter six discussed contextual influence on LD in the chapter seven to overcome the word count problem that will be summarized in table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Contextual influences on leadership development at S-Tell

	S-Tel
Competitive strategy	• Differentiation strategy
Company sector	• Business type: telecommunication • Sector type: for-profit company
Company size	• Large numbers of employees • Managerial levels
International strategy	• Balanced local strategy supporting leadership development
Organisational culture	• Balanced organisational culture supporting leadership development
Technology	• Poor technology infrastructure; • Weakness in technology use
National culture aspects	• Religion • Wasta • Time

6.7. CONCLUSION

The S-Tel case study described in this chapter demonstrated that LD was as a result of the internal and external environment requirements. This was reflected on the type of leadership behaviour/capabilities required and the development methods that best work with developing the leadership required at S-Tel Co according to its available potentials in the current circumstances. As regards identifying leadership needs, it was handled by understanding the requirements of the internal and external environments that helped to highlight what best work with S-Tel Co. In relation to context, as in the two other case-study organisations, it was found that there were two types of factors relevant to the application of LD at S-Tel Co: factors influencing the application of LD; and determinant factors of LD at LICT Co.

It was found that LD at S-Tel Co targeted only the present job through the following:

- Adopting communication competency due to its role to fill gap between the company members after misfiring this relationship since the outbreak of violence in light of the political and religious contradictions.
- The introduction of a policy of learning from experience by using action learning activity for developing communication competency through its components, acting as an effective activity that best fit S-Tel Co in its current environment.
- Adopting teamwork competency to reconnect and strengthen relationship between team members in managerial levels in order to improve the ability to learn, develop, and work by exchanging their opinions and ideas in order to meet the company challenges collectively.
- The introduction of a policy of acquiring knowledge by learning from experts and experienced staff when using coaching method for developing teamwork competency.
- Adopting strategic thinking competency, which is seen as an effective competency in order to tackle and meet unexpected challenges in light of the lack of stability in the environment surrounding S-Tel Co.
- The introduction of a policy of learning from assessment by using feedback method for developing strategic thinking through the rich information collected regarding the company from all directions and due to its role that suits the available potentials at S-Tel Co after Syria crisis.

It was found that the leadership behaviour/capabilities required in S-Tel Co were to work with its internal/external environment. Additionally, action learning, coaching, and feedback method were adopted for developing the leadership behaviour/capabilities required because of their low cost in light the lack of stability that affected on the development budget; and the characteristics of these method worked best with the environment of S-Tel Co to achieve the result required.

Moreover, identifying leadership needs at S-Tel Co took place by analysing its external environment, which served to help S-Tel Co understand the nature of leadership behaviour/capabilities required in an unstable environment. At the same, it was found that analysing internal/external stakeholders helped S-Tel Co understand the weaknesses of its managers. In this regard, there was relationship between identifying leadership needs and internal/external environment of S-Tel Co, acting as the essence for understanding the LD required.

With regard to context, as in the two other case-study organisations, it was found that there were differences between the determinant factors to LD and the factors influencing the application of LD.

More specifically, in relation to the determinant factors, it was found that competitive strategy, the size, the sector of S-Tel Co, and its organisational culture were the key determinants of LD at S-Tel Co. First, it was found that differentiation strategy used at S-Tel Co showed high-skilled managers in all managerial positions through its support to their leadership training. Second, LD at S-Tel Co was required because of the large number of employees and the clarity of job description of all staff, which raised the need for leadership training. Third, S-Tel Co was classified as service sector, acting as a telecommunication Company. This required high-skilled managers to provide high-quality service to its customers, S-Tel believed that the weak performance would affect its reputation in the market. Forth, it was found that although organisational culture of S-Tel Co was flexible after 2011 because of Syria crisis, it was sees as s strict culture with regard to HRD since it operated in 2001.

In relation to factors influencing the application of LD, it was found that national culture aspects and technology were the key issues influencing the effective application of LD at S-Tel Co. in this regard, despite of a strong infrastructure of S-Tel technology, acting as a telecommunication sector, the fight and violence destroyed the company infrastructure, which was reflected on its services and its training sessions. Additionally, it was found that education background of all managers from different ages was the reason for their differences regarding technology use. This in turn, was reflected on using online leadership training, and ultimately delaying such training.

With regard to national culture, it was found that three national culture issues had a large influence on the application of leadership training and development. First, Wasta was seen as a critical factor influencing the application of LD because career development was clearly relevant to Wasta. The influence of Wasta manifested clearly when appointing individuals lacked to leadership and managerial talents who did not have the desire to learn. Consequently, this affected on transferring what they learned into the practice.

Second, religion was perceived as a real challenge that threatened social relationships among all staff in S-Tel Co. It was found that the political conflicts altered to religious conflicts in the civil war between all components of Syrian society after the movement of Jihad from around the world to fight in Syria. This witnessed a clear support from some employees and managers working at S-Tel Co, which created gap between people inside the company. Additionally, the impact of religion was reflected on S-Tel Co when merging between religious conflicts and leadership training that affected the results required.

Third, understanding time value was seen, as an essential need for implementing LD. It was found that time value was neglected by managers when attending to their job or even training sessions for two reasons. First, attending late to job and training seen as an unwritten rule acted to place the managers above the law regarding time respect. Second, there was a great challenge when moving from hot areas to the job daily or even attending training course on time because the hot areas in which the company's employees and managers live witnessed daily fighting between terrorist groups and Syrian Arab army. This affected on the effectiveness of leadership training.

CHAPTER SEVEN: OVERVIEW AND COMPARISION OF THE CASES

7.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous three chapters provided separated detailed descriptions of the findings from each of Case Study Company. In this chapter, I analyze data across the three cases and identified similarities/differences in the process of LD. In doing so, I attempt to provide further insight into issues regarding LD by providing a general explanation of the case-study results. I use the findings generated in each case-study for comparing the empirical results of the three cases.

7.2. CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

The chapter was divided into five main sections. In the first, leadership behaviour/capabilities, development methods, identifying leadership needs for development, and contextual influences on LD in each of the companies were reviewed and compared to explain the similarities/differences between the three cases; followed by a concluding section summarises the preceding four sections.

7.3. LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR AND CAPABILITIES

The three cases agreed that an understanding of the leadership behaviours/capabilities required generally began by assessing internal/external environment. This helped to adopt and develop a set of the leadership behaviours/capabilities that best work with their requirements. However, the findings revealed that the three cases emphasised different concepts of leadership behaviours/capabilities that met the individuals' jobs, and company's requirements. At the same time, although the three companies targeted these three requirements through focusing on different concepts of behaviours/capabilities before and after the Syria crisis, the key difference before and after the Syrian war was altering from long-term focuses to short-term at the three companies.

This section highlighted the differences/similarities in terms of the leadership behaviours/capabilities required at each company that were summarised in table 7.1.

Table 7.1: The type of leadership behaviours/capabilities required

Clusters	LICT	Af-Ro	S-Tel
Big picture sense-making	• Strategic thinking • Understanding the whole • Business skills	• Decision-making/ solving problem • Business skills	• Strategic thinking • Business skills
Inter-organisational representation	• Conflict management	____	• Teamwork
The ability to lead change	• Communication • The ability to change	• Communication • Self-awareness • Adaptability	• Communication

As can be seen from table 7.1, a set of similarities/differences existed between the three companies in terms of the nature of leadership behaviours/capabilities that were being adopted and developed. Strikingly, these observed similarities/differences accorded reasonably well with the responses that top and middle managers gave when asked to determine the adopted behaviours/capabilities at each of the three cases in terms of Storey's (2004) big picture sense-making, the ability to deliver change, and inter-organisational representations (See literature review). Thus, the leadership behaviours/capabilities required were described by the top and middle management at LICT Co and S-Tel Co as being mix between the three clusters big picture sense-making, the ability to deliver change, and inter-organisational representations; while Af-Ro Co as being mix between two clusters big picture sense-making and the ability to deliver change.

For example, the three cases agreed that adopting and developing communication was essential for managers across all managerial levels since they operated. However, in Arab organisations and society, communication among people, managers, and employees had a hierarchal structure (e.g. Hammoud, 2011), the role of communication competency for all management levels at the three companies manifested clearly after Syria crisis to fill gap among staff and reduce the aggressive tendency among them as a result of political conflicts that altered to religious conflicts, as the customers' service manager stated:

> "...our managers in all levels should be able to communicate with all individuals horizontally and vertically because this kind of competencies tends to be vital for

> current business in terms of leaders-followers relationship and company people-customers relationship... particularly after Syria crisis that affected us".

Similarly, the three cases adopted business skills. However, although the three cases agreed about the name of business skills, the essence of these skills were used for specific functional areas at each company; especially, each company was specialised by its own business type that reflected the nature of the business skills required. This agreed with what Hambrick and Mason, (1984) and Zaccaro, (2001) believe that business skills included skills related to specific functional areas across all company departments.

Additionally, the last similarity found between S-Tel Co and LICT Co was to develop strategic thinking competency at all management levels. Both cases attempted to empower their managers to be more active over the civil war that required understanding all forms of weaknesses, strengths, opportunities, and threads, and also predicting the future to avoid any unexpected barriers. Strategic thinking competency was adopted for all managers in S-Tel Co and LICT Co after Syria crisis, which reflected the distributed leadership used at both companies (Thesis, p.111/156).

In contrast, the three companies demonstrated themselves at a high level of differences in the other behaviours/capabilities required and the reason behind their use. Although the three companies were operating in the same environment, the level of difference regarding the leadership behaviours/capabilities required reflected the way by which the three companies evaluated their behaviours/capabilities and the level at which they reacted to their surrounding environment. This highlighted the reasons of adopting and developing the behaviours/capabilities required at each company. At the case of Af-Ro Co, decision-making and solving problem were perceived as intertwined competencies that suited the shared leadership style adopted at Af-Ro Co. The fast change of its environment required preparing its managers at all levels to develop their decision-making and solving problem competencies to meet the external challenges and to meet customers' requirements; especially they were classified as a five-star hotel (Thesis, p.135). Af-Ro Co also developed adaptability to cover the vacancies after leaving most managers with long experience and experts to work abroad. Af-Ro Co attempted developing adaptability to the new managers in order to alter their thinking from previous companies' culture to Af-Ro culture; at the same time, this competency targeted other managers at Af-Ro Co to meet individuals' needs, hotels requirements, and jobs requirements that serve the final objective of Af-Ro Co (Thesis, p.137).

Also, Af-Ro Co adopted self-awareness competency to provide its managers an opportunity to use self-learning after decreasing the development budget because of the political and economic sanctions. In this regard, Af-Ro Co altered its development strategy to short-term purposes targeting only present jobs and focussing on specific needs for managers, job requirements, and company's environment (Thesis, p.134). Self-awareness competency was a result to cover the weaknesses of using short-term training by understanding the own needs of managers and working on these needs individually either by on-job training or off-job training for their future LD; as Cambell, (1971) put it, training was only for short-term purposes, but development was for long-term purposes.

For the case of S-Tel Co, teamwork competency was used after Syria crisis that increased the need of teamwork to meet the pressures of the instability. This crisis required quick responses collectively to provide a high-level service. Also, S-Tel Co supported the collective culture of employees and managers after Syria crisis that was new culture of most Syrians in workplace (Thesis, p.158).

For the case of LICT Co, the ability to understand the entire company was adopted to meet unexpected challenges, and was recommended to all management levels because of the instability that required an understanding of the simplest details in order to take the right and suitable decisions. It linked between active managers and the ability to collect information about details by understanding the entire company from all directions. LICT Co believed that this competency would help its managers to save time and efforts in order to understand the requirements at each managerial level, which suit each level (Thesis, p.109). Also, LICT Co adopted conflict management competency in the light of surrounding conflicts and linked between political and religious conflicts and their influence on managers inside the company. In this regard, conflict competency helped to resolve conflicts regarding the controversial ideas and suggestions after Syria war and its implications to select what fit the company after gaining the agreement and satisfaction of all managers (Thesis, p.112). LICT Co also adopted the ability to change to meet the present job requirements in a dynamic environment and linked the need of this competency to variable business world to avoid all forms of resistance to change in the recent circumstances after Syria crisis (Thesis, p.114).

The analysis of the three cases suggested that the types of leadership behaviours/capabilities required were developed based on the privacy and characteristics of each company in terms of the influence of internal and external environment and how each company reacted to it. Consequently, although the three cases had similarities in communication competency and the name of "business skills", they showed differences in the rest of leadership behaviours/capabilities. Additionally, although the three cases utilised different behaviours/capabilities since they operated in Syria, they did not focus on specific concept of behaviours/capabilities, but they adopted general concepts of behaviours/capabilities that targeted individual's needs, job needs and the company's requirements from one side and focusing on short-term purposes from the other side.

7.4. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

A comparison of the findings from the three cases therefore revealed the similarity/difference of the type of development methods and their purposes at each company that were summarised in table 7.2.

Table 7.2: A comparison of leadership development methods/activities required

Leadership development methods/activities			
Similarities and differences	**LICT**	**Af-Ro**	**S-Tel**
Action learning	LICT used action learning for developing business skills and conflict management competency	Af-Ro used action learning for developing business skills and decision-making and solving problem	S-Tel used action learning for developing communication and business skills
Feedback method	LICT used for developing The ability to change and understanding the whole	Af-Ro used feedback method for developing self-awareness and adaptability	S-Tel used feedback for developing strategic thinking
Coaching	—	—	S-Tel used coaching for developing teamwork competency

Networking	LICT used for developing communication and strategic thinking	—	—
Job Rotation	—	Af-Ro used job rotation for developing communication	—

As can be seen from table 7.2, a set of similarities/differences existed between the three companies in terms of the type and the purpose of LD methods/activities that were being adopted.

The findings revealed that the three companies were adopted development methods since they operated in Syria, and some of their methods were changing based on their needs, or even the purposes required from each method before and after Syrian crisis in 2011 were changing (Thesis, pp100-123-145).

It should be stated that different terminologies were used to indicate action learning activity at the three cases: learning from experience, learning from doing, and learning from daily jobs, but the three companies meant by these terminologies action learning activity despite the application of action learning activity appeared to rely on learning from experience, which was only the first stage of Kolb learning cycle (1984) that includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. At the same time, the three cases used action learning for developing business skills of each company based on their sector and business types.

However, action learning focussed on specific skills rather than the large number of skills, and was flexible by offering actionable solutions for actual crises (Leonard and Lang, 2010; Marquardt, 2000); action learning also had additionally different purposes at the three cases. For Af-Ro Co, action learning was used for developing decision-making/solving problem competencies through the learning from repeating doing tasks that allowed managers learn from their mistakes and solutions; especially after Syria crisis. Also, learning from all forms of action helped increased the creativity in the quality of decision-making and solving-problem through reinforcing these competencies in different situations and circumstances (Thesis, p.124). LICT Co used action learning for developing conflict management competency in the light of its surrounding conflicts, particularly after 2011. This activity helped the managers at LICT Co learn how to articulate and solve their internal disagreements from unexpected challenges via daily jobs, meetings, and repeating doing assignments (Thesis, p.101).

S-Tel Co used action learning for developing communication competency through following the policy of imitating other managers and experts with long experience in meetings, daily jobs, crises, projects and serving customers. This helped managers understand the type of communication required for each situation with different staff behaviours and across the vertical and horizontal relationship (Thesis, p.146). The three companies agreed that action learning activity helped to achieve multiple purposes, develop, and meet the leadership needs in stable and unstable environment in reference to the circumstances before and after Syria crisis, acting as a cheap development activity. However, although action learning was based on the hypothesis that individuals could learn effectively when working on real-time organisational problems through a continuous process of learning and reflection, shifted from individual to team-based experiential exercises of colleagues (Day, 2001), the understanding of its application at the three cases was based only on working on real-time job without reflection. This was likely to be because of adopting also feedback method.

Similarly, the three cases adopted feedback method for developing their different leadership needs. For LICT Co, feedback method was used for developing understanding the whole through the quality and quantity of data from all directions about the entire company. This enabled managers gain systematic knowledge for generic and specific details in order to meet the requirements. Also, LICT Co used feedback method for developing the ability to change that manifested through its internal and external questionnaires of stakeholders that helped highlight weaknesses, strengths, and threads, especially after Syria crisis. Understanding information and building a clear picture about internal/external environment helped LICT Co to develop the ability to change. Also it helped understand the nature of change required and its levels based on each situation by which managers acquired the ability of how to deal with variables (Thesis, p.104).

For Af-Ro Co, feedback method was used for developing self-awareness competency. Feedback method was seen, as a means for identifying the requirements and weaknesses to tackle, especially, the ones that were not seen by managers themselves. Also, data collected by stakeholders' feedback helped other managers differentiate between the requirements of each situation in a country lacked any form of stability. In this regard, the ability to adapt was developed as a result of the big picture that managers acquired by feedback method after understanding a wide set of internal/external views (Thesis, p.128).

For S-Tel Co, feedback method was used for developing strategic thinking competency. The innovation and creativity were linked with the effectiveness of analytical ability when assessing a huge amount of information about internal and external stakeholders. Also, stakeholders' feedback helped managers to demonstrate their ability for predicting challenges and solutions based on the rich details on the entire company (Thesis, p.150).

In contrast, there were three development methods of difference in the findings and the purpose of their use obtained from the case study companies. At LICT Co, networking activity was used for developing communication competency through learning from building relationship with experts, managers and others in projects, assignments, meetings. Also managers learnt the art of communication through working in active networks including individuals with long experience (Thesis, p.102). At Af-Ro Co, job rotation activity was used for developing communication competency in both internal/external rotations. Managers in external rotation identified the type of communication required based on managers, employees, and customers differences from different nationalities when working abroad in other hotels belonging to Rotana group. Also managers learnt how to communicate with employees from different political parties or religions when moving from department to another by internal job rotation. This helped managers understand the nature of communication skills required that best fit different behaviours (Thesis, p.126). At S-Tel Co, coaching was used for developing teamwork competency through one-to-one learning and group learning. Internal and external experts and managers with long experience enabled managers to learn from other experience teamwork skills at all managerial levels. Also the previous experience of experts and managers helped managers learn the ability to work in team when bringing previous events and incidences from other companies to remind the participants that teamwork competency in S-Tel Co was necessary for tackling challenges collectively within the political, economic, and social instability (Thesis. p.149).

7.5. IDENDIFYING LEADERSHIP NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT

The three cases agreed that the mechanism and tactics utilised for identifying leadership needs for development and understanding what best fit each company take place by analysing their environmental forces with emphasis stakeholders' feedback. A comparison of the findings from the three cases therefore revealed the similarity/difference of the mechanism and tactics utilised as listed in table 7.3.

Table 7.3: A comparison of tactics utilised for identifying leadership needs

Identifying leadership needs for development			
	LICT	**Af-Ro**	**S-Tel**
Stakeholders' feedback	Assessing internal employees and customers' feedback	Assessing internal employees and customers' feedback	Assessing internal employees and customers' feedback
Environmental analysis	Analyzing the environmental force with emphasis political, economic, social and technical issues	Analyzing the environmental forces with emphasis political, economics, socio-cultural, and technological forces.	Analyzing the environmental forces with emphasis political, economic, technology, social, market.

As can be seen from table 7.3, a lot of similarities existed between the three companies in terms of the used tactic for understanding what best fit each one regarding leadership needs.

Employees and Customers' Feedback

In each of the companies more emphasis was placed on the issue of internal/external stakeholders, particularly, employees and customers.

In the case of LICT Co, it was embracing a more attention to its employees for understanding its managerial weaknesses from employees' perspective, acting as a global technique and in the pursuit of maintaining the styles used at its parent company from one side and understanding the nature of the leadership needs for development from the other side. This was evident through its large size of LICT that included nearly 700 employees. Also, LICT Co paid its attention to its customers because they are the basis for its service (Thesis, p.105/106). For example, the business type of LICT Co was offering services in marine freight transportation as appropriate for its differentiation strategy that was an effective tool for understanding the leadership needs by taking its customers' feedback into an account.

Similarly, Af-Ro Co emphasised the role of employees for reflecting customers' satisfaction through the daily communication with customers from one side and collecting information about their managers and hotel performance from the other side. Particularly, this was relevant to its differentiation strategy that supported high-skilled staff. This gave employees an active role for identifying the weaknesses regarding the entire company from their views. At the same time, business type of Af-Ro Co in a hospitality sector aimed to provide a high-level quality in services to its customers. This was, in turn, the major purpose of its parent company in order to maintain its reputation via differentiated services in the region. Af-Ro Co focussed also on customers and commented hopes on their feedback that reflected an accurate picture of the reality inside the company. Particularly, customers did not fear the result of their participation in the questionnaires as similar as some employees did.

Consequently, although LICT Co and Af-Ro adopted balanced international strategy and balanced culture, it was still embracing a more global perspective in the pursuit of maintaining the parent company policy and its culture that relied on the role of customers and employees, acting as an effective technique for the weaknesses surrounding their companies understanding and identifying leadership needs for development. The Deputy Chief Operation Manager stated:

> "...although we implement decentralised approach, we cannot ignore the parent company policy and development strategies, so we seek to embrace balanced attitudes with our parent company and our environment. The parent company recommends in its policy to pay attention to internal and external stakeholders to define our weaknesses and adopting the best type of leadership competencies required to develop our leaders. Indeed, stakeholders are best to help us understand our leadership needs and what can work and what not".

The same seemed to apply to S-Tel Co. For example, according to administration manager at S-Tel Co:

> "...our tool is based on our customers' and employees' feedback because they are part in our business, which reflect the real picture of our performance....".

In this regard, despite of the fact that S-Tel Co was categorised as a domestic company, it adopted global standards in terms of international development strategy and strong culture supporting HRD including leadership from one side, and maintained its differentiation strategy supporting leadership training and development within its unstable environment from the other side (thesis, p.163). Also, a large number of employees that was nearly 2000 employees and the type of services offered to its customers in telecommunication sectors reflected the way in which a company defined what fit its leadership needs. Consequently, S-Tel Co focussed on the large number of its employees and customers' feedback to draw a clear picture about its managers' performance and the quality level of its service.

Environmental analysis

Although the three companies adopted internal/external stakeholders' feedback as an effective technique for understanding leadership needs, scanning and analyzing their environment at macro, meso and micro levels was another technique for understanding their weaknesses, and identifying their leadership needs for development.

In the case of Af-Ro Co, it was linked between leadership needs and environmental force in order to identify what fit Af-Ro Co (thesis, p.129/130). In this regard, Af-Ro Co adopted global standard for understanding its weaknesses through analysing political, economic, socio-cultural, and technological environments surrounding its business to draw big picture about its leadership needs. However, although Af-Ro Co relied on analysing the environment forces as a technique to understand its leadership needs, it was already recognised that there were other contextual factors perceived as the major determinants to its LD represented by its large size, its hospitality sector, its differentiation strategy, its international strategy and its culture supporting training and development.

For LICT Co, it adopted the same parent company technique for analysing the political, economic and social issues to understand what can be done to tackle its surrounding environment. This was evident also by the fast change of its leadership capabilities and development methods required for its managers after Syria crisis. At the same time, LICT Co was controlled by other issues that determined the nature of leadership training and development. This was correlated with the large number of its employees, the business type of LICT Co offering services in marine freight transportation, as appropriate for its differentiation strategy, and adopting the same culture of parent company and its development strategies with some flexibility in terms of the type of leadership capabilities and development methods required for Syrian environment (Thesis, p.105/106).

In S-Tel Co, despite of being a domestic company, it was attempting to cross Syrian borders to the regional markets. This manifested clearly by adopting global standards for understanding leadership needs. The manager of managing and governance relationship unit noted:

> “there is a correlation between understanding leadership needs and internal and external environmental forces and other determinants by which it can identify the leadership competencies and the development methods required because when linking such issues together. It would be easy to define the type of development methods that are needed to develop the leadership competencies required”.

S-Tel Co scanned its environmental force for understanding its weaknesses in general and its leadership needs in particular by analyzing political, economic, market, and social issues continuously, acting as the basis for understanding the nature of the leadership needs in S-Tel Co (Thesis, p. 151/152).

Additionally, it was found that the three companies were not only similar in the tactics and mechanism used for understanding their weaknesses and identifying leadership needs for development, but also in the nature of resource of leadership development. This was evident through the name of their development methods and activities that are similar to those that are also utilised in the West with difference in terms of the purposes required from these methods (Thesis, p.105, 129, 152).

Additionally, the findings revealed that the three companies did not provide a clear process that helped to understand how individuals were selected for leadership training. Also, it was found that although the three companies paid attention to their HR development at operational, middle management and top management levels, but they failed to identify leadership needs for each manager or leader at individual level, rather this was targeting the needs of leaders and managers at collective level. It was noted that managers at operational levels were attending leadership training with those who were at top management; however, most experts were from HR department and those who with long experience in top management. At the same time, most managers, except experts at top level were participating in training. Furthermore, the three companies did not target the rest of individuals who did not have managerial roles or responsibilities in the leadership training and attributed this to the belief that non-managers did not need managerial skills.

The application of LD at the three companies was based on learning from classroom and action to build individuals’ experience. This was mostly noted before and after Syria crisis, but LD was mainly formal before Syria crisis, whereas after the crisis the development methods became more informal and had short-term purpose.

The findings revealed that although the nationality and the core business of the three companies were different, they were adopting Western experience and knowledge regarding management and leadership training and development through relying on local and foreign experts and focusing on online resources. Also, the findings revealed that LICT and Af-Ro relied on top management and HR department in association with the head office of their parent company, regardless of the level of freedom given to instructors at each company, while in S-Tel, the top management and HR department are the key instructors for identifying leadership needs.

Additionally, the findings revealed that LD at the three cases focused on different concepts of leadership competencies and these concepts target jobs, individuals, and company's requirements. Therefore, LD approach tends to focuses on the behaviours and capabilities that include mixed concepts to meet the current requirements of the jobs, individuals, and company at the three cases.

7.6. CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENTA

Comparison of the findings from the three cases studies therefore revealed a lot of similarities existed between the three organisations in terms of contextual variables.

Table 7.4: A comparison of contextual influences on leadership development

Context			
	LICT	**Af-Ro**	**S-Tel**
Competitive strategy	• Differentiation strategy • low cost leadership strategy	• Differentiation strategy	• Differentiation strategy
Company sector	• Business type: marine freight transportation and • Sector type: for-profit	• Business type: hospitality and hotel	• Business type: telecommunication • Sector type: for-profit company
Company size	• Large numbers of employees • Organisational managerial levels	• Large numbers of employees • Organisational structure	• Large numbers of employees • Managerial levels

International strategy	• Balanced development strategy supporting leadership development	• Balanced international strategy	• Balanced local strategy supporting leadership development
Organisational culture	• Balanced organisational culture supporting leadership development	• Balanced organisational culture	• Balanced organisational culture supporting leadership development
Technology	• Poor technology infrastructure • Weakness in technology use	• Poor technology infrastructure • Challenges in technology use	• Poor technology infrastructure • Weakness in technology use
National culture aspects	• Religion • Wasta • Gender • Political and economic sanctions	• Religion • Wasta • Gender • Political and economic sanctions	• Religion • Wasta • Time

Competitive strategy

It was found that competitive strategy in each of the companies was differentiation strategy that had an importance with HRD strategy in general and LD in particular and was, at the same time, suitable for companies seeking for a high-level performance to satisfy their customers.

As a result, in S-Tel Co, the quality was the key characteristic accompanied with the company after it operated. S-Tel Co worked hard to occupy the market through a high-level service to customers. This required strongly a high-skilled staff to complete the tasks required for differentiation. Also S-Tel helped the state sector for developing its managers. Similarly, in Af-Ro Co and LICT Co, business strategy introduced was based on “common principles” which stemmed from the parent company's competitive strategy and way of doing things at a high-level of quality to achieve their business objectives for competitive goals.

What was particularly noticeable about differentiation strategy adopted at the three companies was that it appeared to be linked to the stable environments, as demonstrated by its positive implications for LD on the three companies since the time they operated in Syria, which was characterised by its stability before 2011. In the case of LICT Co, it was altered from differentiation strategy to low cost leadership strategy and this was linked to the fast changes of its environment. Although it was recognised that low cost leadership strategy was best to suit the period after 2011, its attention was not paid to leadership training. The HR manager stated:

> “...but when we change our strategy to low cost leadership, our attention switches away from LD in this company because we use the low cost leadership strategy when the environment and market affect on our productivity. This makes LD unnecessary, rather business and technical skills tend be more important”.

In the case of S-Tel and Af-Ro Co, although differentiation strategy failed to support leadership training after 2011, S-Tel Co and Af-Ro Co linked their commitment for adopting this strategy to a high-quality level, acting as one of the key determinants to leadership training. The Chairman at Af-Ro Co noted:

> “...the application of the differentiation strategy for achieving the results required tends to be logical due to its support to high-skilled managers, but for now this is questionable in our environment because for us differentiation is more developmental strategy in a stable environment before 2011, and it failed to achieve the outcome required after 2011, but we are still committed to it despite of its weakness now because we believe there is no strategy can support our HRD better than this strategy”.

Company sector

A number of aspects of the business and sectors’ types within which the companies operated appeared to have exerted an important influence over leadership training of each of three cases. In the case of Af-Ro Co, it appeared that the prime factor that influenced the parent company's approach towards LD over other branches across the Middle East was the “business type”. Thus, “hospitality” was considered to be the basis for adopting leadership training to meet guests' requirements based on differentiation. Hence, attention was paid to training and development that best fit the individuals’ needs, jobs requirements and company’s environment within hospitality and hotels sector to offer a high-quality in services to guests. The HR manager noted:

> “some business types require their own leadership skills that work best with, and thus this illustrates why we have our own leadership behaviour and capabilities.... offering a high-level service to our guests requires us meeting our staff and job needs and the environment requirements surrounding our hotel”.

Similarly, S-Tel Co linked between the privacy of each business type and the LD required to offer a high level of performance. Telecommunication was considered as a critical sector for leadership training, acting as competitive sector in Syrian market, thus, meeting telecommunication requirements was essential for the reputation in the market. In the case of LICT, its business type as a marine freight transportation was differentiated from other business types in industry sectors with regard to the nature of LD required and attributed this difference to the belief that marine freight transportation seek to offer a high-quality services to its customers within a high competitive companies in the Mediterranean ports. Thus, high-skilled managers helped complete this role across all managerial positions in marine freight transportation. The engineering procurement division manager noted:

> “telecommunication, hospitality, banking, transportation sectors require LD much more than manufacturing sector, such as car, oil, drug industries because these types of business give attention to productivity, which do not need leadership development”.

In the case of LICT Co and S-Tel Co, it was linked between LD and for-profit sectors companies to which they belonged and attributed this to the belief that for-profit sector companies relied on HRD departments to ensure the application of LD to complete the tasks required. For example, S-Tel Co went further beyond the state sector to support its organisations with regard to HRD including leadership that reflected clearly the weaknesses of the organisations managed by government in state sector. The financial manager stated:

> “Syrian state sector does not pay attention to its HRD of its people especially those who are leaders due to the challenges that often accompany with the state sector, such as financial issues. So we support managers of most organisations behind the state sector in our training and development as a kind of cooperation”.

LICT Co, despite the high need to be locally responsive, acting as MNC Company, also sought to maintain following the parent company policies and strategies with some flexibility regarding training and development to fit LICT requirements for preserving its reputation and image across the leading marine freight transportation companies in for-profit sector in the Mediterranean countries. The Business Control & Internal Audit manager observed:

> "LICT Co that is for-profit company pays attention to HR department because we committed to the policy and development strategies of the parent company. Therefore, training and department in our company stem from the development strategies of the parent company, of course, with flexibility in some situations, and this can tell how the type of sector determines development strategies and policies for us with taking into an account the nature of LD that best fit our own requirements".

Company size

This factor seemed to have contributed to be as a determinant to the LD required in the three companies as illustrated below.

S-Tel Co contained nearly 2000 employees working into the head-office and its branches with 44 managers at the middle and top management and 106 managers at operational level and the rest were employees and co-workers. For LICT Co, there were nearly 700 employees working across the organisational managerial levels with 22 managers at the middle and top management and the rest were at the operational levels between managers and co-workers. For Af-Ro Co, there were between 200 and 400 employees based on seasons. 14 managers at middle and top management and the rest were at operational level between managers and co-workers. Consequently, the three companies were categorised as large companies, which needed adopting training across the managerial positions; especially, the competitive strategy at the three companies was mainly differentiation strategy that supported training for managers to improve the individuals and company performance.

In this regard, a large number of employees reinforced the theory of job description for managers' role and responsibilities at each managerial level. This, in turn increased the need for adopting continuous training in terms of the leadership behaviours/capabilities required and their development programmes that suit each company to achieve its objectives, as the Procurement manager stated:

> "Because our company has a large number of employees, it needs to manage them and manage their jobs...but this needs specific training and development skills and abilities to do so".

This was the reason beyond linking between company size and leadership training at the three companies. The head of quality department at S-Tel noted:

> "The size of companies is the basis for determining the form of leadership development".

The three companies emphasised the leadership and management role and organisational structure. It was found that a large size of the three companies made job description across organisational levels clear to individuals. HR manager at LICT illustrates:

> "Job description is clear because leadership role and responsibility are distributed based on their job description, which requires adopting LD methods and programmes to develop leaders for their role...".

Although company size at the three companies was seen as a key determinant to LD, it was also seen as a temporary factor influencing leadership training after Syria crisis in 2011. HR manager at Af-Ro observed:

> "Since 2011, our large size has become problem to us because we cannot cover expenses; and this was affected by the low level of customers since 2011, which affected our annual income and development budget. Simply, our large size had positive influence on our training, but now it has negative influence because we should pay out attention to other issues in hotels".

It should be further noted that the number of managers in the middle and top levels at S-Tel Co was the highest, followed by LICT Co and then Af-Ro Co. This reflected the need for managers, as appropriate for the number of employees at each company. In turn, this carries the importance for adopting continuous training for leaders and managers at the three managerial levels in S-Tel Co, Af-Ro, and LICT Co.

International Strategy

A number of aspects of the international strategy to which the companies committed appeared to have exerted an important influence over the nature of LD required of each of three cases. In this regard, the influence of the international strategy in LICT Co and Af-Ro Co was correlated to the degree of their decentralised approach regarding their development strategies. The findings revealed that there is no relation between adopting strict international strategy and the application of LD in most companies working in unstable environments. This was evident after 2011, as achieving the result desired by using a strict strategy of the parent company seemed to be questionable. At the same time, achieving the result required by ignoring the parent company strategies regarding business strategy and development strategy seemed to be questionable because the national culture would penetrate and interfere widely in the affairs of the hotel. Consequently, it was found that LICT and Af-Ro attempted to adopt a balanced strategy that fits their parent companies and the local country in which they work. The food and beverage and vice chairman manager at Af-Ro stated:

> “This factor influences LD when we implement the same training and development strategy used by our parent company without any change or modification because when the parent company imposes specific programmes for our hotel, this influences our HRD including leadership and its development; furthermore. Each company has its requirements that fit with its environment, so our parent company must understand this point. This can explain why we are adopting similar development strategy, but we select what it works or fit our needs in this unstable environment, particularly, since 2011”.

LICT and Af-Ro revealed that although the commitment to the parent companies regarding development strategies, implementing the same development methods for the same purposes with their parent companies was questionable. It appeared that the prime factor that influenced the parent companies’ approach internationally and regionally toward LD was based on "the privacy and characteristics of the country” in which they work. Hence, LICT and Af-Ro were considered as foreign companies, and as a result, their parent companies pursued a multi-domestic international strategy as appropriate for the circumstances in the country in which their subsidiaries operated. HR manager at LICT stated:

> “The reason is that each country has its privacy.... international strategy must respect the national culture and business system of the country in which a company works”.

In contrast, although S-Tel Co was a domestic company; it adopted global standards regarding development strategies supporting leadership training, but international strategies did not influence S-Tel, rather this helped to follow its development plans without pressures, as the head of quality department at S-Tel illustrated:

> “International strategy has big influence on the application of LD and its methods if the development strategy of the parent company does not take into an account the local context and its privacy. But in the case of Syriatel Company, because it is a local company, the impact of international strategy tends to be non-existent; and thus, this could provide ample space to work without restrictions from others unlike multinational companies”.

Organisational Culture

In LICT and Af-Ro, The findings revealed that the organisational culture of LICT and Af-Ro was based mainly on flexibility to overcome the local challenges after Syrian crisis that required breaking the parent company culture at LICT and Af-Ro Co to ensure meeting the local requirements. This was evident when merging between national culture aspects and career development or leadership training, but both companies placed in mind their commitment to the strictness in issues correlated to the development policies and the training culture of the parent company. Thus, a more decentralised approach was adopted towards LD at LICT Co and Af-Ro Co; especially, in the type of leadership behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods to achieve a higher degree of responsiveness and adaptation to the needs of local environments, individual needs, and job requirements for meeting the ultimate customers' satisfactions. The Chief Operation Officer at LICT stated:

> “The parent company is not capable to implement its strategies in our company without modification, therefore, this company selects its leadership competencies and their development programmes; as a result of our surrounding environmental forces in order to have high-skilled managers able to meet customers' satisfactions”.

The impact of national culture on organisational culture of LICT and Af-Ro was somewhat similar to S-Tel Co despite of being a domestic company. The findings revealed that the three companies acted to turn a blind eye to some things that were inconsistent with its own culture, but the major reason behind breach of the company's culture was to achieve the public interest after the gap between company staff due to the civil war. This influence was evident after Syria crisis on 2011. The manager of managing and governance relationship unit observed:

> "The strict culture mostly leads to challenges and barriers toward the application of effective training and development because of ignoring the national culture and other characteristics in Syrian society. In fact, Syria crisis was the reason for using Wasta for career development of some managers because we tried giving the same opportunity to all people from different religious beliefs and political belongings. This would reflect our integrity in this crisis. In turn, this flexibility for career development contradicted with our real culture, but it was used because of its importance in the case of Syria. For that reason, some of our managers are not effective and lack the ability to develop as leaders".

In S-Tel, the findings revealed that the culture of S-Tel Co supported training and development for its managers and non-managers because it was seeking to embrace strict global strategies regarding development strategies before Syria war that manifested clearly through its strong culture toward training of managers from one side and its contributions to Syrian society and its state organisations regarding HRD including leadership from the other side. Thus, the company was increasingly seeking to lay down international performance standards by adopting global HR activities where possible, such as relying on external experts, Western sources of its LD practices, and external training. The reason beyond its attitude was its attempts to cross the border and extend its business abroad before Syria crisis that was a motive for the application of leadership training of all its managers, as the following quote by the Sales manager at S-Tel illustrates:

> "Syriatel culture supports training and development because of adopting differentiation strategy. This allows us passing our company boarder to help Syrian society and HRD of some state organisations, such as, child and adult learning projects, women learning in rural areas, and developing managers in state sector. So this can publish Syriatel culture".

However, the findings revealed that although S-Tel Co was aware of the mysteries of the national culture aspects because of being a domestic company. It was influenced by the national culture as similar as LICT and Af-Ro companies. At the same time, the flexible culture helped S-Tel Co to tackle its challenges, but it had also negative impact on its effective application of leadership training after the beginning of the fight in Syria. The marketing manager noted:

> "Because we are local company and our staff are local, using strong culture seems to be silly for them, especially in these exceptional circumstances facing Syria , so we always see that our staff merge between their believes regarding political supports and religious belongings and tasks, even in training sessions, they show their dissatisfaction with the simple things".

Technology

The findings revealed that a number of features of the nature of technology adopted by the three companies played a role in influencing the application of LD. Although LICT Co and Af-Ro Co classified as foreign companies paid their attention to information technology for HRD including leadership, this posed a barrier to them after they operated in Syrian market. Similarly, despite the fact that S-Tel was a domestic company, it shared the problem of technology infrastructure in Syria with LICT and Af-Ro Co.

In case of S-Tel Co, LICT Co and Af-Ro Co, it was linked between technology and completing managerial tasks and leadership training, but the country in which these companies work failed to improve technology infrastructure despite of the shy attempts before 2011. This had negative impacts on the business investments in general and these companies in particular. The financial manager at S-Tel observed:

> "Although the business system in Syria represents valid environment for encouraging foreign to invest, the infrastructure of technology is still weak; and it is getting from bad to worse .... In fact, the poor network influenced our business and training because we are a large company, which requires communicating with other branches in all cities through meetings and workshops via Skype".

Furthermore the findings revealed that technology infrastructure was targeted by armed group, which also has negative impact on their performance after 2011. This problem was evident in the following quote that illustrated how technology infrastructure was destroyed and its impact on training in turn by the information system manager at S-Tel:

> "This problem has become a real challenge to our company due to the fighting in Syria that destroyed most our mobile network towers, so we failed to get access

> to internet for a long time and continuously because of being the target of most terrorists, which makes learning by internet not more than a dream. This is the reason beyond cancelling online trainings used in our seminars and workshops until the circumstances become better, such as NASA training and leadership development".

It was found that Western sanction did not only affected Syrians or government, but also all companies working in Syrian market, regardless of their nationality or sector. It was found that sector type and business type of LICT, Af-Ro, and S-Tel relied on technical equipment. The findings revealed that the three companies failed updating their training tools and equipment that was based on CD/DVD-based training after Western sanctions. Similarly, the three companies failed transferring Western technology for leadership training after the Western sanctions. The assistant human resource manager noted:

> "Today learning does not occur successfully without technology facilitations of participants because the traditional way of learning has become from the past and no one can accept listening to someone for couple hours; so internet in Syria is poor and transferring new technology is blocked because of the Western sanctions and this is a real challenge that makes the application of LD process ineffective as well".

The findings revealed that although the types of the three companies were different and the nationality of staff were mixed between local, Arab, and foreign, the vast majority of employees and managers were local. In this regard, there were some divergences between old and young managers in terms of technology interest and the capability to use technology for learning and development purposes in leadership. In the three companies, it was found that there was relationship between the level of technology interest and the age of managers, and this was attributed to the development of education system in which old and young managers learnt. The findings revealed that this created gap between young managers and old managers regarding technology use that became more difficult at their age. The Deputy Chief Operation Manager at LICT stated:

> "The reason beyond this was the difference between the period that IT was involved into learning process and the period that traditional teaching was used without technology. Indeed, this can illustrate why some our mangers do not have

> the ability to develop their technical skills for using technology or even any interests in technology".

Additionally, in S-Tel Co, Syria crisis created difficulty to run continuous training sessions to teach its staff the latest regarding the technology for leadership training purposes. The findings revealed that the failure of running continuous training session on technology was linked to the fact that managers were continuously leaving the company after the divergence in the political and religious attitudes with the company and other colleagues. This required filling the vacancies, in turn. Consequently, S-Tel Co failed running training sessions targeting all new staff in one group due to the high cost of running continuous training sessions targeting only few participants. This was the major reason beyond the disparity between managers or between other employees of how to use technology. The administration manager observed:

> "We daily have staff leaving our company to other companies and new staff are appointing in this company..... It is difficult to run this training session for only few people; and the reason is that we do not know when or how many staff will leave our company; and when or how many will apply for our vacancies. We wish running one training session targeting all new staff, for this reason, yes, we feel we are not supporting all new managers as similar as their old counterparts. So this is the reason for the gap in the ability of using technology between managers".

Culture aspects

A number of features of the national culture also played a great role in influencing the application of LD in the three companies. The comparison of the findings from the three cases revealed that religion and Wasta were seen as the key factors that influence LD at the three companies.

Religion

In case of LICT Co, it was linked between religious bigotry and the political conflicts that altered to religious conflicts. This had negative impacts on the social relationship between employees and managers from different religious backgrounds that include: Alawi, Shia, Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali, and Zāhirī. This was evident by the conflicts between some of these moderate and secular Islamic doctrines from one side, and Al-Ikhwan Al-Muslimun movement and Salafi and Wahabi movements from the other side, as the Chief Operation Officer illustrates:

> “We lack any specific schedule that would explain all our plans and what we intend to do; actually, we lack a stable environment due to religious conflicts between a wide set of armed groups and their supporters from one side and Syrian government and its supporters from the other side. This conflict was reflected on all aspects of life in Syria; even foreign companies because the majority of employees and managers are local, so this required fast changes of our development methods to fit our changeable environment; these development methods do not achieve our purposes because the application of each method should take its time to be effective, but this is impossible in our current circumstances”.

The findings revealed that religious conflicts affected also the application of LD successfully because the purpose of leadership training altered to short-term purposes and LICT Co failed to present a clear schedule of LD and paid its attention to adopt a short-term schedule of leadership training included specific leadership behaviour/capabilities to tackle the religiosity among staff.

This was similar to Af-Ro case. Religiosity entered the company life after Syria crisis that affected all components of Syrian society widely. Accordingly, religious conflicts became a sensitive issue between staff from other religions when bringing religious conflicts into training. The findings revealed that the application of Islamic rules that correlated to such issues as bikini in the hotel beach, alcohols, and the hijab of women posed a real challenge for running leadership training sessions, especially, the religious bigotry was evident with experts that were responsible for HRD activities in Af-Ro Co. This acted to slow down leadership training. The marketing manager noted:

> “This country is a secular country, but people became more religious because of the crisis, so some male leaders do not prefer training with women managers without covering their heads; thus this is a big problem to us”.

In S-Tel Co, when Islamic groups around the world moved to fight in Syria under the banner of Jihad, this acted to create a kind of enthusiasm for implementing all Islamic rules. This was evident through braking family and friendship relationship between staff. The implications for religious bigotry manifested clearly by deviating from the basic purpose of training sessions; especially, such sessions were emptied of its content and importance after transferring Islamic conflicts and its details inside leadership training sessions, as the manager of managing and governance relationship unit stated:

> "The crisis in Syria is religious crisis not only between Syrians, but also with all Muslim countries because they believe that some Syrians are not Muslim and 'the Jihad' is essential. In turn, our company seeks to meet the external challenges by its HR plans targeting this challenge. Indeed, religious conflict is clearly seen in our company, so we are trying to meet such challenges by adopting the skills required for our managers to overcome such problem".

The findings revealed that merging between religious beliefs and training sessions acted to place the purpose of training sessions in the wrong track; especially, leadership training sessions were emptied of its content and importance, especially, most the religious conflicts and its details were brought to company leadership training sessions. In this regard, for instance the HR manager noted:

> "Some managers ignore other managers and experts' request for leaving their ideas and religious belief outside of the company, rather than bringing their religious beliefs to the training session. For this reason, our top managers and experts do not accept other managers to tell them what to do........especially they are supporting the opposition, which is fighting and killing based on religious belief. Therefore, this yes, had influence on our leadership training in practice through wasting the time on such issues into the whole training session".

Wasta

It was found that although LICT CO and Af-Ro Co committed to the policies of their parent companies, regardless of adopting their decentralised approach, and S-Tel Co adopted global standards in its business, Wasta played a role in an influencing the application of leadership training at the three case companies before and after Syria crisis. The findings revealed that the major reason beyond using Wasta was attributed to the vast majority of Syrians and Arab employees and managers working at these companies.

In the case of Af-Ro Co, it was found that it relied on Wasta to gain facilities via staff appointed by some officials' recommendations, particularly, those who had a strong relationship with the government. The intervention in the affairs of the company in friendly ways and responding to their interventions willingly was very common in Syrian society. Also, the Syrian war acted to make Af-Ro Co under pressure regarding breaking its policy, the manager of leisure and health department noted:

> “We use Wasta to get facilities via those who are appointed in our leadership team through their public relationship, but this is still problem to us because they do not have leadership talent, which creates a barrier into our training and development practice”.

Also, it attempted to have the same distance from all staff, regardless of their religious backgrounds. This was found by supporting some managers for career development despite of the lack of their leadership talent and the ability to learn. The finance manager stated:

> “We select our leaders to attend our external training programmes, external job rotation, and even career development based on their religion background to create balance amongst all members in a company because this will show that our company has the same distance from all members.... but this has big influence on LD in a company because not all people who are selected have leadership talent or have the ability to develop as leaders”.

In LICT Co, Wasta was perceived as one of the most national culture aspects influencing the application of leadership training because of selecting for its managerial positions ineffective individuals via Wasta. The HR manager stated:

> “Selecting the right person in the wrong position or selecting the wrong persons for leadership position due to Wasta is one of most national culture factors that influence our LD because most our career development stemmed from this truth, so the problem occurs when appointing managers lacking to the leadership talent or ignoring and avoiding their attention to self/other developments”.

The findings revealed that Wasta affected on translating what was learnt in leadership training sessions into jobs after appointing the wrong individuals for several managerial positions. Also, managers appointed via Wasta attempted to ignore training because they believe that managers and leaders do not need to training and development, as the following quote illustrates by the Engineering Procurement division manager:

> “some of our managers feel that they do not need to develop; and also prefer working in the same way when they were appointed as managers because they believe that their managerial positions do not require from them much training of their skills.... thus resistance to train makes the application of LD ineffective and seems to be wasting time and expensive to us”.

Similarly, in S-Tel Co, the findings revealed that Wasta was also used for appointing managers to attend external courses or MBA degree in local and foreign universities, acting as a rare opportunity and appointing individuals for this opportunity from one religion would affect the company reputation. The appointment therefore was based on supporting individuals more than others from all directions. The human resource manager stated:

> “Some of our managers were selected for attending external training and MBA degree in Syrian and European universities because these opportunities are not available for everyone because the participants can get financial support for their personal life”.

The findings reveals that S-Tel and Af-Ro are alike because of appointing staff for managerial positions by official recommendations and wishes in order to get some facilities from the government via those staff and their relationship. However, it was found that the influence of Wasta on leadership training was evident when managers linked between their participants in training and their reputation among their employees that would be affected, and attributed their attitude to the fact that they were appointed via Wasta, which was perceived as a power and could be used to influence the company. The marketing manager stated:

> “This procedure leads to appointing people do not have leadership talent and refusing most forms of change or development because they believe that managers in managerial positions do not need any training. In fact the problem is not at this stage; rather its influence can be seen in their department because of ignoring what is needed in their department”.

Additional cultural factors

The findings revealed that LICT and Af-Ro identified gender issue and political and economic sanctions as additional cultural factors influencing their LD, whereas S-Tel identified time, acting as an additional cultural factor that affected the application of its leadership training successfully.

In LICT Co, it was found that although the country in which LICT operated was secular country, the equity between men and women was influenced by social and cultural aspects in Syria. Because of the lack of security after Syrian war, LICT differentiated between men and women regarding external trainings. This was evident after 2011, especially LICT Co stuck to the moral commitment to provide a high-level of safety to its staff. The Deputy Chief Operation Manager stated:

> “We delay some of our night courses for leadership because of security reasons. An unstable environment encourages the terrorism phenomenon in our country, which required us paying attention to our women’s safety when moving from place to another particularly after 7:00 p.m., especially moving to the port because of kidnappings and snipers”.

The findings revealed that the differentiation between men and women at LICT that was correlated to the level of security and the safety was not the only reason, but Syrian society was characterised by its male domination. This was evident when men at LICT Co refused working under women leadership and attributed this to the belief that women were best to work in home for supporting their families, and linked their career in management with an exception if they work under men leadership. The HR Manager noted:

> “Because men have more opportunity than women for leadership development; thus this can affect their career development because women are committed to their families, husbands, kids...etc. this makes commitment to external training programmes is difficult; and most men in the company do not accept working under women managers; although many women are talent for managerial positions, most men here prefer working with men managers; even women prefer working with men managers”.
>
> Similarly, Af-Ro Co linked its equity between men and women with the social environment in which it works after 2011. This was evident through the nature of its population in general and the sex of managerial staff in particular. The IT manager noted:“Although females have leadership positions, their numbers are still low”.

The findings revealed that Af-Ro Co attributed the inequity between men and women for managerial positions to the fact that women failed to commit to the company not only for jobs, but for attending training sessions by off-job training and on-job-training. Given that women were also committed to their own families' responsibilities, Af-Ro Co relied more on men for managerial responsibilities than women. The security manager illustrates:

> "...most our women are married and have family responsibilities and are not able to be away for a long time despite they have very good qualifications and talent for leadership roles...".

However, the findings revealed that most women appointed for non-managerial positions at LICT and Af-Ro showed leadership talent, but their circumstances did not allow them going further for career development and this had influence of the effectiveness of leadership training.

In the case of Af-Ro Co and LICT Co, the finding revealed that the political and economic sanctions did not refer to the institutional system in the country in which Af-Ro Co works; rather it was referred to the cultural reasons due to Syrians' attitude and their admiration in most liberation movements around the world. This became a part of most life aspects and was seen as unwritten rules of Syrian culture stemmed from parents and their social rules and daily relationships. It was found that the Western sanctions were imposed in the last 40 years on Syrians, but these sanctions reached a peak after Syria crisis in 2011, as a kind of pressure on the government from one side and on Syrians because of their supports to their government from other side. However, these sanctions targeted also companies working in Syrian market. This included Af-Ro and LICT, as the Procurement manager illustrates:

> "Syrians were across all areas a revolutionary people, we read this in the history books in schools even in the contemporary history, and our enemies witnessed our bigotry to this country.... our parents showed their anti-colonial struggle, this expanded the gap between us and most Western countries because they believe good relationship should be based on economic interests, so the Western sanctions were a result of struggling against all forms of colonial. This was what I learnt from my grandfather and my father in home by stories and this is Syrian culture".

It was found that these sanctions have negative impacts on LD by two forms. The vast majority of employees and managers working in LICT Co, regardless of their political and religious backgrounds learnt to resist the new and old copies of Western colonialism and its ambitions in their country. This was evident through the backgrounds of staff that reflected the real culture of resistance in family relationship and social relationships. The manager of engineering procurement division who stated:

> "...we are a revolutionary people influenced by Che Guevara, Nelson Mandela, and Jamal Abd al Naser thoughts who supported freedom against the Western governments. Therefore the majority of Syrians supports their ideas and teach their children their thoughts; and their Syrian governments since 1970s adopted those leaders' ideas. Indeed, this is the reason for political and economic sanctions.... these sanctions target Syrians attitude and their government, but unfortunately all companies including our company were affected by these sanctions as well".

The implications for Western sanctions on LD in LICT Co and Af-Ro manifested clearly when they failed to delegate their managers abroad for attending external training because of visa difficulties. The procurement manager noted:

> "...political sanctions included getting visa to all Western countries, so we cancelled many training courses because of the difficulties for gaining VISA, this affected our leadership training, especially the general one that targets future LD and we moved to target only current training that target our today's job".

Also, most customers moved to other companies in the region after they had fear of imposing sanctions on their trade due to dealing with companies working in Syrian market. This had negative impacts on the company income in general and development budget in particular. Many leadership training sessions that had general purposes were altered to short-term training. It was found that this decreased the development budget where the attention altered to short-term leadership training as a result of political and economic sanctions. The marketing manager stated:

> "The number of local guests has decreased 50% and foreign guests 100%, this affected our budget for development, so we currently build our leadership needs

> with the current situation to avoid any unnecessary budgets and focus on today rather than tomorrow".

In contrast to Af-Ro Co and LICT Co, S-Tel Co identified time, acting as an additional cultural factor that affected the application of its leadership training successfully. An understanding of the time value reflected the nature of Syrian society in which S-Tel Co works. The findings revealed that the fight between Syrian Arab military and terrorists groups helped to create a kind of chaos through the spread of weapons in the people, and the emergence of takfirist groups increased the state of not feeling safe. Accordingly, the lack of time value was linked with the lack of security while managers were going from their home in the hot areas to their company. This was evident when managers failed to attend training sessions and even their job on time. The information systems manage observed:

> "Before 2011, our managers acted to follow unwritten rules, such as attending their job after 2 hours from the allowed time. This took place the same when attending training sessions, which makes their attendance useless because of attendance only 20 minutes of 2 hours training unit daily. This is still the same after Syria crisis because some of them come to job late or do not come because they live in the area that witness fighting between the Syrian Arab army and terrorist groups. As a result, this makes transferring learning into practice within the Syria crisis questionable. However, it is not supposed to tell you all that".

Also, the lack of time respect was also linked with the style of life and social system in which the managers at S-Tel Co live and grow, acting as the basis for understanding the level of time respect. Although the majority of Syrians are educated, they spend their time on pleasures and useless issues, as the Procurement manager stated:

> "We are people do not respect time because we did not learn its importance before we came to this company, so we are wasting our time on playing card, spending the daylong in restaurants smoking shisha or chatting on Facebook... I am talking about people in our managerial positions because they think that they are above the law, so they should not be restricted by the time. When we talk about training courses, it is difficult to say that all managers have attended the whole course, thus, they miss rich information because of ignoring time value".

Also, the findings revealed that the lack of time respect expanded the gap between the new inexperienced managers and the old experienced managers. It was found old managers failed to update their knowledge in the skills required for a particular purpose; and other managers showed a real desire to learn on their weaknesses and confirmed their hard work to overcome their challenges by using future willing rather than making tangible results. This acted to slow down learning at S-Tel Co not only for some managers, but for other managers because S-Tel Co was seen as a network that merges between middle and top management. The customers' service manager noted:

> "The annual conference and our regular meetings recommend that we should continue and commit to the training required, but this seems to be silly for some of our managers and the only answer they have is to say insha' Allah, this is a real problem toward implementing a real leadership development. They think that because of Syria crisis, such training is not useful because it is targeting only today jobs".

7.7. SYNTHESIS OF FINFINGS

This thesis reported on a study that provided a contribution to the theory of leadership development. The study, which was carried out in Syria, brought to light the importance of LD among the three cases, taking into account the particular technique used for understanding leadership needs and how they react to contextual factors. The interaction of the mechanism used for identifying leadership needs and contextual factors helped to identify what best fit each company, and suggested differentiated leadership behaviours/capabilities and their development methods that were tailored to each company despite of being working in the same environment.

The study's findings coincided with other research findings concerning LD in Western literature, but they highlighted the dynamic interaction between the mechanism used for identifying leadership needs and context to define what was called best fit each company; as conger (1992) says *skills building* category was the most common approach in LD training. Thus, the study's findings emulated the Conger's approach to explore how LD was occurring in Arab context. The following debate summarized and theorized the findings from the cross-case analysis.

The findings from the three cases exhibited both marked similarities and significant differences. Different types of LD methods have different purposes (Hallinger, 2005). The findings revealed that there were similarities/differences in the type of the used development methods and the purpose of these methods. The findings suggested that development methods were used for multiple purposes and specific purposes. With regard to similarity, all LD methods were targeting middle and top management in the three companies. It was also found that the three cases adopted action learning activities despite of using other names for reference to action learning, and this agreed with what (Marsick and O'Neil, 1999) said that action learning in its own right had split into different schools of practice. The findings revealed that the three companies relied on the philosophy of learning by repeating doing tasks in daily jobs, meetings, tasks, and projects. Additionally, the three companies adopted feedback method as a basis for understanding weaknesses, particularly, their leadership needs, and developing their managers.

At the same time, marked differences existed with regard the type of development methods used and the purpose of their use. Marquardt et al. (2009) linked between action learning and leadership only four competency types, namely, Cognitive skills, Execution skills, Relationship skills, Self-management skills. The findings of this study linked between action learning and other competencies. In LICT Co, action learning was used for developing business skills and conflict management competency that gave the managers practical opportunities for evaluating the effectiveness of their business skills used within each department in order to make modifications or even changes of these skills, as appropriate with the requirements. This activity also helped managers learn from unexpected challenges and conflicts how to solve their disagreement by daily jobs and daily and weekly meetings, and repeating doing tasks, proved its quality to achieve the result required effectively with a low-cost result. In Af-Ro Co, action learning was used for developing business skills and decision-making/solving problem through repeating decision-making and solving problem that allowed managers learn from all forms of action and helped increase the creativity in the quality of decision-making and solving-problem in different situations and circumstances, and also reinforced the effectiveness of business skills used through continuous evaluation of these skills in daily tasks and communicating with guests and their feedback. In S-Tel Co, action learning was used for developing business skills and communication competency through learning via projects and daily meetings from other managers their style and behaviours in communication; also action learning provided a good opportunity to highlight the weaknesses through repeating doing tasks, which allowed understanding the weaknesses and strengths.

The use of feedback can be valuable as a development tool in LD context due to its simplicity (Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998; Awater et al, 2007; Day, 2001). The findings revealed that feedback method was used for different purposes in the three companies. In the case of LICT Co, it was used for developing the ability to change and understanding the entire company through its rich data collected from all directions. In Af-Ro Co, it was used for developing self-awareness and adaptability. The rich data by this method allowed managers understanding their own weaknesses to tackle individually, and allowed not only new managers, but old managers adapting to new changes in their environment. Feedback helped new managers to compare between their previous jobs and new job requirements. In S-Tel Co, feedback was used for developing strategic thinking through linking the creativity and innovation through analyzing and assessing a huge amount of information about the whole company; this had positive implications on the strategic thinking.

It is argued that networking is used for developing socialisations, solving-problem, and consulting for project (Day, 2001); building professional relationships, pointing out best practices identifying new trends, recommending articles, books, and seminars (Thornton, 2004); to improve understanding of the “big picture” competencies and management skills (Black and Earnest, 2009). The findings revealed that this method was utilised for different purposes based on the own requirements. In LICT Co, it was found that networking was used for developing communication and strategic thinking through internal/external relationship and through working in active networks with experts and managers with long experience in projects, assignments, and meetings that allowed individuals not only developing the art of communication, but their experience in strategic thinking in different circumstances.

It is argued that job rotation is used for developing specific skills (Kaymaz, 2010). Accordingly, Bennett, (2003) claims that this method is best utilised for developing communication skills. The findings of this study revealed that Af-Ro Co adopted job rotation for developing communication competency. Both internal/external rotations helped understand the nature of communication skills required for different behaviours when working abroad with managers, employees, and customers from different nationalities, and communicating with employees from different political and religious backgrounds by internal job rotation.

Gray (2007) argues that coaches help to guide participants by a transient culture including company's culture, and helping participants to become more committed and confident. The findings revealed that S-Tel Co adopted coaching for developing teamwork competency by one-to-one learning and group learning, especially, most coaches were internal/external experts and managers with long experience who helped managers improve their ability to work in teams through learning from coaches with long experience.

As noted in chapter 2, a number of typologies of leadership behaviours and capabilities have been developed (e.g. Bray *et al*., 1974; Luthans *et. al*., 1988; Howard and Bray, 1988; Campbell *et al*., 1970; Spencer and Spencer, 1993; Goleman, 1998; Tubbs and Schulz, 2006; Goleman *et al*., 2002; Boyatzis, 1982:2009; Boyatzis *et al*, 2002). The most widely accepted of these is that of Storey (2004: 24), acting as the best way to interpret and explain LD in an organised way. Accordingly, his typology was explicitly utilised in the present study.

Storey (2004) set out three types of leadership behaviours/capabilities namely the big picture sense-making, inter-organisational representation, and the ability to deliver change. These mete-capabilities of Storey related to leadership at the highest organizational level. More specifically, this was evident with Peters, (2010) that attributed the big picture sense-making to the strategic leadership level, Hartley and Benington, (2010) attributed inter-organisational representation meta-capabilities to a top-level leader, and the ability to deliver change was attributed to leadership role (Fisher and Sharp, 1998; Waldman and Yammarino, 1999; Storey, 2004). Consequently, the study’s findings contradict those researchers in that the big picture sense-making and inter-organisational representation meta-capabilities are dedicated to those who are at the highest leadership levels, however, the study’s findings confirmed that the three cluster meta-capabilities were adopted across the three management levels and were not confined to a specific level.

McDonnell *et al*, (2011) and Yeung and Ready, (1995) argued that there is no agreement for a specific model that identify particular competencies to adopt across different contexts or companies. Similarly, Hayes et al (2000) claims that different leaders working in different contexts may require developing different sets of idiosyncratic competencies to respond to the requirements of their immediate circumstances. The findings showed that although the behaviours/capabilities required in LICT Co and S-Tel Co were a blend of big picture sense-making, inter-organisational representation, and the ability to deliver change; while in Af-Ro Co, its requirement was a blind of big picture sense-making and the ability to deliver change.

Consequently, the leadership behaviours/capabilities required seemed to reflect the own needs of each company operating in the Arab world. Also what was called differentiated leadership behaviours/capabilities and their development methods were tailored to each company was as a result of the dynamic relationship between the technique used at each company for identifying leadership needs and the contextual factors, and how they react to their contextual factors. This was supported by Muna (1980) who said that “some of the Western managerial practices may be harmful if applied without adaptation to Arab environment”.

In terms of similarity, the three cases adopted the name of business skills with differences in terms of their privacy regarding the sector to which each company belongs, the three companies adopted communication competency to fill gap among managers and between all managerial positions, especially after Syria crisis. Although similarities and differences among the three companies, strategic thinking competency was the only competency required in both LICT Co and S-Tel Co. In relation to differences, In LICT Co, the ability to change, conflict management, and understanding the whole were found to be specific competencies that served the requirements at LICT Co. In Af-Ro Co, self-awareness, adaptability, decision-making / solving problem were found to be specific competencies that served the requirements at Af-Ro Co. In S-Tel Co, teamwork competency was found to be the only specific competency that served the requirement in S-Tel Co.

Additionally, the selection of what best work with each company in terms of the leadership behaviours/capabilities and their development methods at the three companies regardless of their similarities and differences were as a result of the dynamic interaction between the technique used for understanding the weaknesses and the contextual factors. However, although using internal and external stakeholders’ feedback and PEST analysis to understand the performance and the weaknesses with focusing on political, economic, and social factors after Syrian conflicts were common mechanism in the three companies, the leadership behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods seemed to be more specific context to each company. The findings of this study agree with other research supporting the role of analysing internal and external environments into LD (e.g. Storey, 2004; Smith *et al*, 2004; Worrall and Cooper, 2001).

Consequently, this seemed to reflect the influence of a number of factors. First, perhaps the most important were what were seen as factors that determine the introduction of leadership training. The three companies adopted differentiation strategy supporting high-skilled managers, but LICT Co altered to low cost leadership strategy to maintain its business within the instability despite the main strategy was differentiation strategy. The findings revealed adopting differentiation strategy would place managers in continuous training to ensure completing its objectives and this supported Dalakoura's (2010) findings that there was relationship between differentiation and leadership development. The findings revealed also the large size of the three companies required aligning between leadership training and the managerial roles of managers as a result of the large numbers of employees. However, this contradicted with Bartlett and Ghoshal (1997) view in that company size did not have any influence on leadership development, rather how companies in different sizes face challenges in developing their leadership.

Although the three companies were categorised also under hospitality, telecommunication, and marine freight transportation sectors, they provided high-level services to their customers, which increased the need for training. Additionally, although LICT Co and Af-RO Co adopted decentralised approach, they were still committed to their parent companies regarding their culture and international development strategies. At the same time, despite of being domestic company, S-Tel Co adopted global standards regarding strong culture and international development strategies supporting leadership training. This was evident by its contribution to support its managers and other managers beyond state sector organisations.

However, the findings revealed other factors perceived as influencing factors to the successful application of leadership development. Spreitzer (2008:77) suggested that having technology can provide some opportunities for leadership development. With the kinds of technologies in place for a virtual organisation, new opportunities for the training and development of managers and executives are possible. The findings revealed that the poor infrastructure in Syria made technology a strong factor influencing the application of training and development in companies, even before Syria crisis. Furthermore, the differences between managers in terms of technology use reflected on their leadership training. Martineau and Patterson, (2010) argued that the differences of social systems had a great influence for deeper understanding of LD practices and identifying the best design of its development. Similarly, Mabey and Finch-Lee (2007) claimed that this approach was to illustrate why some leaders' behaviours stemmed from national system despite of the global tendency of most companies.

The study's findings revealed that national culture aspects were the most important factors influencing LD at the three companies. This supported what Al-Faleh said, that “a country’s culture has a great influence on the individual and managerial climate, on organisational behaviour, and ultimately on the types of management development programmes offered” (1987: 19). Furthermore, the study’s findings completed what Al-Falah reported, and revealed how cultural aspects affect the application of LD in the companies operating in Syria. Similarly, the findings confirmed previous research by Tlaiss and Kauser (2011) that indicated that Wasta was used for career development of the managers in the Middle East.

Additionally, the study’s findings revealed that managers appointed via Wasta demonstrated a high-level egoism by blocking the leadership knowledge to other managers at lower levels for ensuring their monopoly of the management positions. This was described by Western discourse and Arab scholars as a ‘dangerous other’ or alterity (e.g. Maalouf, 2000; El-Kharouf and Weir, 2005). Also, the findings revealed that supporting specific people more than others via Wasta was to ensure the equity among all individuals from all religions and political backgrounds after Syria crisis. However, this reflected the weaknesses of managers for leadership role by the lack of their leadership talent and the ability to learn. These findings confirm previous findings by Loewe et al (2008) who concluded that Wasta contributes to the mediocre quality of the Jordanian business climate by exacerbating the complexity of administrative procedures and adding to unfairness in administrative decisions.

Moreover, the religiosity entered the social relationship of the three companies and affected on the relationship between staff that was a mosaic of ethnic. However the study's findings contradicted with what (Khatib, 2012:6) believed that "the terms of Islamic revivalism and Islamic renewal do not necessarily refer to an increase in religiosity, but more to an increase in overt, public religiosity, as such, Islamic revival is the permeation of society with activities, organisations, speech and attire that are considered to be Islamic". The findings revealed that the increasing tendency for "Jihad", acting as one of the five pillars of Islam rules increased public religiosity. This was evident by external Jihad people from around the world, which increased the enthusiasm for local people working in the three companies, as it was shame on any Muslim who did not help their “Muslim brothers”, particularly, those who were crossing the border for Jihad inside Syria. The findings revealed that managers refused working without the application of Sharia rules after combining between religions' details and traditional and historical conflicts from one side and managers’ beliefs from the other side. This had impact on the purpose of the leadership training. Consequently, the purpose of LD altered to short-term, and also many experts and managers with long experience in HRD left their work after religious conflicts that acted to slow down training. In one way or another, this was supported by Muna and Khoury (2010) who confirmed that Arab context, corporate culture, mentality code of ethics, values and beliefs play a significant role in how Arab manager cope with stress under the harsh conditions, such as the terrorism in Syria.

For LICT Co and Af-Ro Co, the Western sanctions had impact on their business in Syria, and this was attributed to the background of the vast majority of employees and their admiration in most liberation movements around the world. This picture reflected the culture of resistance against the Western governments in which managers live and grow, which stemmed in family education and social relationships in Syrian society.

However, the findings revealed that this was reflected on getting visa for external training; and also the annual income decreased in both companies which influenced on the development budget, in turn. These findings agreed with what Weir called it as the interplay of culture and institutions “it is often very difficult to draw boundaries around what can be considered to be cultural influence and what is institutional influence, as they reinforce each other” (2004:146).

In contrast to LICT Co and Af-Ro Co, the lack of time value at S-Tel Co influenced on leadership training. This was correlated to the security and safety reasons after the fight between Syrian Arab military and Syrian opposition. Also, managers with long experience refused to attend training sessions on time. However this study contradicted partly with Weir's (2010) view of the time value in the Middle East that focused on how time value was perceived in the Middle East, rather than focusing on the reason beyond understanding time value as it is now in the Middle East.

Throughout the cases and the cross-case analysis, a number of themes emerged in each case-study which could be merged into the following themes:

1. Best fits a company's particular needs: Although the three companies adopt generic behaviour/capabilities among them, particular needs were found at each company. In turn, the development methods adopted for developing their leadership behaviour/capabilities had multiple and specific purposes at each company.

2. Determinants of leadership development: The decisions of whether to introduce leadership training were relied on the following determinants: Differentiation strategy, business type/sector type, employees' numbers /organisational managerial levels, balanced international strategy and organisational culture.
3. Factors had impacts on leadership development: The factors that were perceived as the key barriers to the application of LD were as the following: Poor technology infrastructure and weakness in technology use, and culture aspects that included Religion, Wasta, and additional cultural factors.
4. The major finding from the study reveals that LD was context specific and differentiated among companies. This became the major finding of this thesis. The dynamic interaction between context and the mechanism used for identifying leadership needs helped to ensure what best fit a company's particular needs. As a result, this would emulate how LD is applied and why leadership is developed.

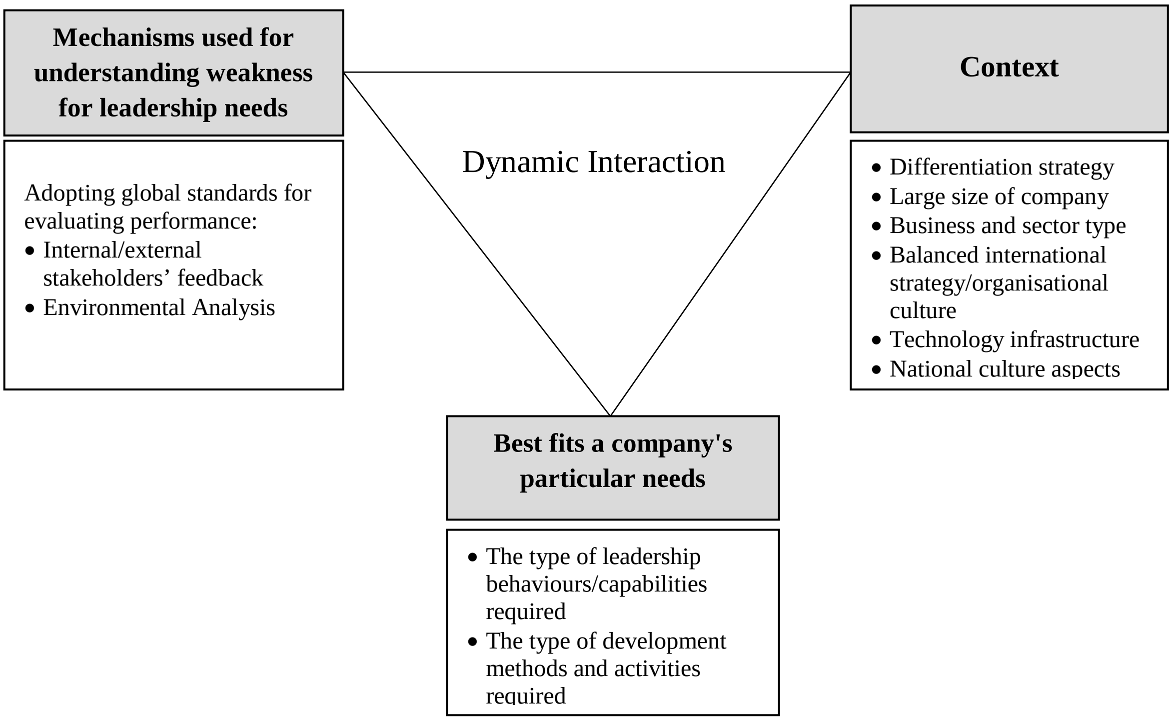
The case study companies highlight some of the major concerns and challenges intrinsic in leadership development. But a major question arises: How are Western LD ideas applied in the Syrian/Arab context? Why is LD pursued in Syrian/Arab context? Indeed, there were no magic formula to provide answer for these questions; rather it was a matter of a dynamic interaction between the mechanisms used for understanding leadership needs that would help understand the weaknesses from one side, and contextual factors from the other side. This contributed to help a company to identify what fit its staff needs, job needs, and its requirements in the environment in which it operates.

Furthermore, a set of factors need to be present to ensure LD correlated with a company' characteristics such as differentiation strategy, a large number of employees, business and sector types, balanced international strategy and balanced organisational culture. This also required taking in an account the national culture factors, such as religion, Wasta, and the other additional culture aspects from one side and other institutional issues, such as technology infrastructure from the other side that affected on the application of leadership development.

However, LD of any company occurs through the dynamic interaction between its context and the mechanisms used for understanding weaknesses for identifying leadership needs. This process would identify what was called best fit regarding the type of leadership behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods. According to Tubbs and

Schulz (2006: 29), “there is no more important task with regard to LD than identifying the competencies and meta-competencies that comprise leadership”. Consequently, skills building as Conger (1992) called it was the most common approach in LD training, which reflected how LD occurred. The three cases and the findings suggested differentiated leadership behaviours/capabilities, and their development methods was tailored to each company, because no two companies were identical in the requirements, and the way to which they react to the surrounding environment, regardless of some similarities that may be found.

Figure 7.1: The Map of Leadership Development Process



Themes of figure (7.1) described the process of LD that provided answers to the key research questions

1. Why is leadership development pursued in the Syrian/Arab context?
2. How are Western leadership development ideas applied in the Syrian/Arab context?
3. What are the factors that influenced this leadership development?

The details in figure 7.1 related to the findings of this research, where companies used global standards for evaluating their internal and external environment. This helps to highlight the particular requirements concerning the behaviours/capabilities required and their best development methods. Ultimately, this would emulate the way of how LD is applied and why leadership is developed because the study's findings suggest that LD is seen as a continuous process in the three companies, which occurs by learning while developing the behaviours/capabilities required via the development methods. This supported what Conger (1992) suggests that building skills and LD program was common for LD training. Consequently, this would explore how LD is applied in and why leadership is developed in Arab context.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

8.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the overall aim and objectives of the study are reviewed. The key findings that emerged from the literature and empirical work of this study are then highlighted. Finally, the last section discusses the present study's contributions, limitations and, in the light of these, identifies possible avenues of future research.

8.2. THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study was to understand and explain the character of and influences on leadership development in the Arab World, using evidence from for-profit sector in Syria. Hence, at the start of the study, four key objectives were defined:

- To identify concepts from the literature on leadership and leadership development that can be used to describe, interpret and explain these phenomena.
- To engage critically with arguments and evidence in the published literature that help evaluate how ideas in Western leadership commentary may be tested for applicability in Arabian country contexts.
- To sample and source units of analysis within Syria as an example context for evaluating factors around LD in the Arab world, using a primary data set assembled for this purpose.
- To draw conclusions from the empirical analysis to contribute to the evolution of theory regarding LD in Arab contexts.

The objectives of this thesis were achieved. The literature on leadership and LD was reviewed and presented in chapter 2. Following this, the approach of applying LD in an Arab context and the factors influencing LD were described, analysed, compared and discussed in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. Conclusions and theory building was achieved by developing a conceptual model that emerged from the study as shown in figure 8.1.

8.3. SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS

This section includes a summary of the literature review's key findings, followed by a summary of fieldwork and empirical findings.

8.3.1. SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review on key LD revealed that four broad themes dominate it. First, three common LD interventions offered by in-house and by external providers that are actively used in the area of LD including formal and informal methods and activities implemented to develop the leadership needs (e.g. Day, 2001; Conger, 1992; 1998), Conger and Benjamin (1999); Fulmer *et al* (2000); Hartley and Hinksman, (2003); Hernez-Broome and Hughes (2004). This is noted that LD methods and activities tend to have a global characteristic, but this does not mean, they are used for the same purposes across companies in different context. Second, leadership behaviours/capabilities that can be utilised to meet the requirements of individuals, jobs, and company environment tend to be different across companies and the reason for their use (e.g. Giber *et al*, 2009; Storey, 2004; Boyatzis (1982, 2008). It is noted that although the needs of leadership competencies differ across contexts, the reason and the way of their use can also differ from company to another across different contexts. Third, the way of understanding leadership needs tends to be global technique used in both developing and developed countries, regardless of the degree of meeting the leadership needs (e.g. Storey, 2004; Mabey and Finch-Lees, 2007; Giber *et al*, 2009). It is noted business world has become somewhat unique in terms of leader selection, retention tools and processes because of globalisation. Fourth, the factors that influence the type, approach and implementing of leadership development. It is noted that a set of common factors, namely, differentiation, large company size, for-profit sector, technology, balanced organisational culture, and international strategy, whereas national culture has negative implications for LD in terms of the application of LD.

More generally, the literature review verified the major weakness of the existing literature on LD that provided the essential rationale for this thesis (see section 1.3). A marked lack of research into LD in developing and emerging economies, particularly in the Arab contexts is noted. In this regard, the literature review helped to validate the potential of exploring and investigating the concept of LD adopted by Western and indigenous companies in Syrian/Arab context and the factors that influenced its application.

8.3.2. SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK KEY FINDINGS

The fieldwork undertaken, in general, and as demonstrated in chapter seven, shows some similarities with the West regarding the nature of LD practices, but marked differences among LD practices.

More specifically, the findings revealed that companies working in Syria, whether foreign MNCs and Arab/indigenous, were adopting or moving to implement of what may be considered as Western LD practices, especially, those that were related to the resources utilised the actors involved in training, instructors involved in the decision of whether they apply leadership training or not, the procedures of selecting the right person for training, the tactics utilised for identifying and selecting leadership needs. This included analysing micro, meso, macro environmental analysis with emphasis also on internal and external stakeholders' feedback at each company. The findings indicate that the dynamic relationship between contextual variables and the mechanism and tactic utilised for identifying leadership needs helped each company to adopt what best fit its internal and external requirements regarding leadership behaviours/capabilities and their development methods.

Although context variables included internal and external factors, the findings revealed that there were determinant factors of LD and factors affecting on the application of leadership development. In terms of determinant factors, the study found that five factors determined the decision of whether LD was required in the three companies. The first determinant was differentiation strategy that accompanies with leadership training for ensure its application. Also, a large number of employees and the job descriptions of managers across organisational levels required training sessions continuously. Additionally, business type and sector type to which the three companies belong because for-profit companies and the business type of the three companies: telecommunication, hospitality and marine freight transportation under the service sector required continuous leadership training. Also, although S-Tel Co was a domestic company, it adopted global standards and development strategies, and although the other two companies adopted decentralised approach, they maintained their commitment to their parent companies policies and development strategy with flexibility in terms of the behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods. Moreover, a balanced organisational culture that combined between strong culture supporting leadership training and flexible culture regarding some national culture exceptions after Syria crisis.

In terms of factors affecting on leadership development, the findings confirmed that similar to other countries in Arab contexts represented by weaker informal institutional constraints, such as Wasta in Arab world and *Guanxi* in China (Hutchings and Weir, 2006), *Blat* in Russia (Peng and Luo, 2000), and *Ubuntu* in Africa (Sulamayo, 2010). Wasta was the key barrier to training and development for private priorities depending on each company. This was evident by selecting individuals for training, and appointing individuals for managerial roles by using personal relationships with money to do so. This confirmed what Cunningham and Sarayrah, (1993) said in that the use of Wasta is not strictly limited to the family network, but rather can sometimes include close friends and even acquaintances, so Wasta is not limited to a particular sector of human interaction. It exists in most Arab life fields. However, this study shows for the first time that Wasta played an essential role in Syria crisis despite acting as a hidden force.

Religious bigotry was another barrier after political conflicts altered to religious conflicts and people began meeting the religious call for Jihad or applying Islamic rules, which had negative implications on the internal relationships among staff at each company.

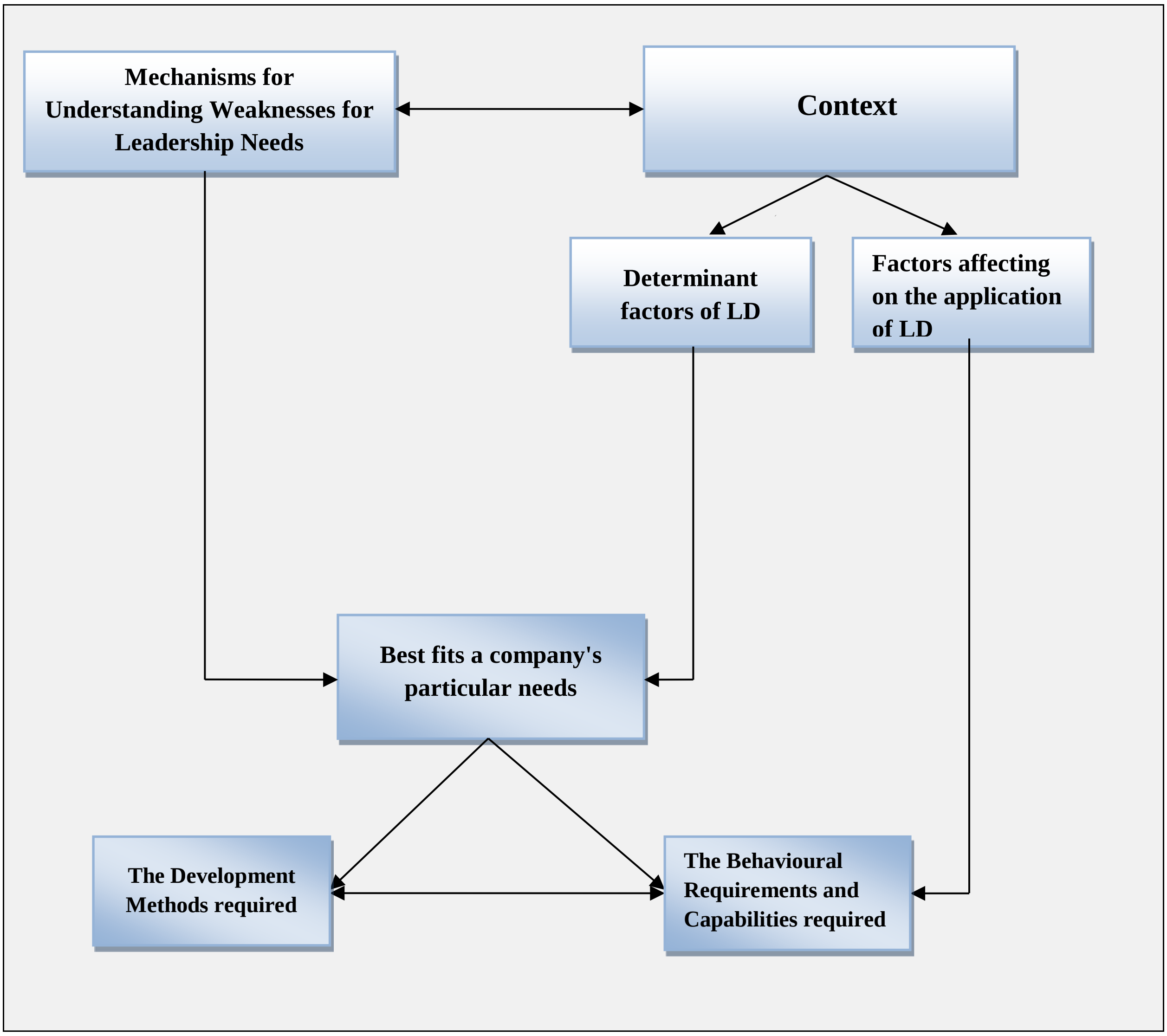
Furthermore, additional cultural factors were found only in LICT Co and Af-Ro Co that had influences on their LD, namely: gender, political and economic sanctions. In terms of gender, the lack of security acted to increase the gap between men and women. Additionally, most men refused to work under women leadership even if they had leadership talents. Turning on sanctions, political and economic sanctions reduced the number of external training after the difficulties for getting visa or even transferring technology equipment, whereas the lack of time value was the main factor that influences LD at S-Tel Co, which is a common characteristic in Arab context.

With regard to the type of behaviour/capabilities required, the findings revealed that although there were generic behaviours/capabilities among companies working in different contexts, regardless of their nationalities, the types of leadership behaviours/capabilities were tailored to each company because this was correlated to the company characteristics and how it reacts to its environment because this had implications on the application of LD methods and the behaviours/capabilities required.

Additionally, the findings revealed that some development methods that were mostly Western sources were more successful than others in Syrian/Arab contexts, but with some differences in their purposes and the reason beyond their use. Differences with the West were also noted in terms of the purpose of development methods that were utilised for multiple purposes in Syrian/Arab context. However, this was somewhat different from a company to another in Syrian/Arab context despite of the convergence of Arab contexts. Also, the informal methods had the same role of formal methods before Syrian/Arab contexts in crises.

As a result of the above, the findings draw conclusions from the empirical analysis to contribute to the evolution of theory and to inform practice regarding LD in Arab contexts through presenting an integrated model for introducing a leadership development with Arab world (figure 8.1).

Figure 8.1: Leadership Development Framework in the Arab Context



8.4. RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

The contribution of this study to knowledge is presented below under the following two sub-headings: contribution to theory and contribution to practice.

8.4.1 CONTRIBUTION TO THEORY

This study used a mostly qualitative case study research that yield thick, rich descriptions provide justification for analytical generalisation and help also to be as a reference point for comparisons with other case studies research (Yin, 2003b; Goetz and LeCompte, 1984). Nevertheless, it should be recognised that the study's findings are limited in a number of ways.

First, the findings add new theoretical insights into LD in an Arab context and how LD experience is implemented in an Arab context- an area where there has been a dearth of research. This research contributes to theory in terms of comparing Western LD knowledge and experience with those utilised in Arab context, and in extending and supporting the theory on key leadership development.

This study was based on case studies of three companies. Consequently, it leaves open the question of whether other companies that have domestic, international and global characteristics working in Syria are, in common with those studied here, adopting similar approaches to the LD of their subsidiaries in both Arab world and developed countries. Accordingly, this study suggests one area of future possible research, which is the systematic comparison of how companies from differing countries working in all Arab countries, and implementing the origin approach of LD across all Arab countries. This would help to explore more details of how LD is approached in each Arab country and understand the level of modification if it is required.

Second, the present study's findings, as already noted, do lend support to the view that national culture factors are affecting on the application of LD. This research contributes to theory in terms of our theoretical understanding of how these factors are stemming from the socio-cultural changes because of the instability as a result of geopolitical changes in the Middle East, particularly after 2011, it has been unable to shed much light on cultural-traditional factors that are seen as permanent factors, which are different from temporary cultural factors. Given that this weakness has not had echo in much of the existing literature, there would also seem grounds therefore for future research to be conducted in this area.

Moreover, and related to the above point about national cultural factors, this study's findings revealed that the national cultures factors that had negative impacts on the three companies operating in Syrian context were influenced by the political and religious conflicts and this shed light to examine the same national culture in more stable Arab countries to compare the both results and this has potentially important implications for future research. Accordingly, this suggests that cultural aspects are somewhat connected with geopolitical changes, and seem to have a variable characteristic. It further suggests that one way in which this could be done would be to focus attention on the impact of national culture on LD within each Arab country ‘individually’, rather than restrict attention, as many previous studies have done, to the Arab world as ‘a whole’.

Third, this study contributes to the literature on the area of the transfer of LD practices to Arab context where there is also lack of research. Hence, this study also contributes to the theories of convergence and divergence (Geppert et al., 2002; Gooderham and Brewster, 2003; Hall and Soskice, 2001). This study contributes to our understanding of the nature of the development methods required for LD in Arab contexts and the purposes of their use. The findings of this study confirm that there is what may be termed crossvergence (Ralston, 2008), or constrained convergence (Muller, 1999), as there are some similarities along the following: a) the nature of LD in terms of the resources utilised, the actors involved in training and development, and instructors of these practices, the behaviours/capabilities required of Arab leadership development, and the identification of the divergence in what companies working in Arab region, regardless of their nationality adopt to meet the requirements of individuals, jobs, and company’ environments compared to that suggested in the extant literature ; b) the mechanism and tactics utilised for identifying leadership needs in terms of stakeholders feedback and micro, meso, and macro analysis; c) the application of Western LD methods/activities. These practices were transferred by local managers and the expatriate managers who studied management in European and American universities, foreign and local experts, and the head office.

In turn, there is some divergence and differences in terms of the factors that influence LD as some factors had to include Arab-specific characteristics that were rooted in Arab institutional-cultural context indicating the dominant influence of Wasta, religion, gender, time, political and economic sanctions, and the need to adapt to the interplay of culture and institutions because of difficulty to draw boundaries around what can be considered to be cultural influence and what is institutional influence (2004:146).

The present study focused only on the nature of LD that were being implemented and the factors that influenced them in specific for-profit sectors because most the leading companies in for-profit sectors operating in Syrian market withdrew from Syria. It did not therefore explore the experience of other companies in for-profit sectors. Additionally, a comparison between the foreign experience in the for-profit organisations and the local experience in state sector organisations regarding the nature of LD were not being implemented. There would also seem grounds therefore for future research to be conducted in this area.

8.4.2 CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE

This study made a number of valuable contributions concerning leadership development. First, this case study made a significant contribution to knowledge through reviewing relevant literature and empirical research related to leadership behaviour/capabilities, identifying leadership needs for development, LD methods, and contextual influences that were regarded as essential for leadership development. This study also developed a conceptual framework of introducing LD in Syrian/Arab contexts.

This study also made a significant contribution to practice through involving managers at middle and top levels. This occurred through exploring how LD was approached in their companies in Syria. This study explored that the nature of LD required was shaped based on the individual, job and company needs to meet their surrounding requirements. This study explored also of how companies developed the leadership behaviours/capabilities required because LD methods were used for achieving multiple purposes among the three companies, even if those companies were operating in the same context.

Additionally, this study explored that the dynamic interaction between the mechanisms used for understanding weaknesses and leadership needs for development and contextual influences helped companies to understand what best fit their internal and external requirements to meet. This was through adopting specific leadership behaviours/capabilities and specific development methods for specific objectives.

In this vein, this study had an additional contribution through exploring that LD occurred through learning from experience since the company began evaluating its weaknesses and assessing its micro, meso, and macro environment ending with selecting the behaviours/capabilities required and their development methods. This process represented a period through which LD was occurring in a company.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates the importance of differentiating between two types of contextual factors in an Arab context. First, this study explored that there were factors seen as determinants of LD in companies working in Arab contexts, which were: competitive strategy, company size, company sector, organisational culture, and international strategy. Second, there were additional factors that had negative impacts on the application of the LD in Syrian/Arab context represented by technology and national cultural aspects.

This research has given a different dimension to leadership behaviours and capabilities that are necessary to be found in business manager, particularly for those who want to implement key LD programme in the Arab world.

This study also contributed to practice through identifying major gaps between theory and practice. Nadler and Nadler, (1990: 1-18) indicated that training refers to learning that relates to current job; and education refers to learning that prepares the person for a different but with identified job despite it is not related to a specific present or future job; whereas development refers to learning for growth despite it is not related to current a specific present or future job. In this regard, the study found that LD targeting short term purposes in the three companies after Syrian crisis and companies were mostly using LD stemmed from the present requirements. Additionally, national culture aspects and technology seemed to be the key barriers affecting on the LD in Arab contexts.

The study also presented an empirical model for introducing a LD in Arab contexts using evidence from Syria. The model was based on the data obtained from the field study. This could be appropriate for Syrian/Arab contexts that share the same traditional characteristics from one side and companies working in these (Arab) contexts, regardless of their nationalities from the other side.

8.5. PERSONAL REFLECTION

When a student moves from Masters stage to research stage, a set of requirements are needed. These requirements begin with applying for an admission, searching for a suitable supervisor, meeting the university requirements, searching for the desired topic before going in-depth in study and research. The following stage is to read and search about the selected topic to be under investigation to collect further information about the topic. Several issues reflected on my journey during the research period. The first challenge was to write the first formal proposal about the topic required in order to confirm the direction of the study.

The second challenge was the nature of materials and information that were not studied in my previous degrees. This needed further efforts to meet the requirements in the first academic year of my research degree. The next academic year was much better than the first one after I got used to collecting in-depth information about the topics, notes, and comments, which enabled me to know what I want. In addition, preparing the RS4 report (the University of Bedfordshire's transfer to PhD stage report) was a great challenge at this stage because this needed data collection. Additionally, in the period after my RS4 report, data collection, data analysis, writing up and defending my thesis were the major challenges for me for different reasons. For example, in the first journey to Syria, data collection was supposed to be from the following companies: MTN, Al Baraka Bank, Four Seasons Hotel, but in the second journey to Syria for collecting the remaining interviews, the problem was in that these companies refused to be involved in my study.

More generally, completing this thesis successfully needed flexibility and adaptability in all circumstances. This was evident by making a quick decision because of the lack of time and stability, so I conducted the required data in other companies. It should be further noted that after Syria crisis most companies either withdrew from Syrian market or adopted strict policy for conducting research. Despite the difficulties, the final decision was made on three companies: S-Tel Co, LICT Co, and Af-Ro Co. Furthermore, the difficulties for conducting qualitative research in Syrian context with local managers are real problems, so this needed additional demands on sensitivities of the researcher to maintain working within the strict policy made by S-Tel Co for conducting data without using voice recorder for security reasons. I tried to be open-minded and respect their attitude.

In October 2012, I was detained near to Damascus, while I was conducting my data with S-Tel Co. Therefore, it was necessary to think twice about the right decision of whether I continue conducting data because I was about to lose my life. At the same time, I was worried that I would lose the opportunity to complete my data collection, so after three weeks' kidnapping, I decided to continue data collection stronger than ever before and this made me more persistent and perseverant on completing the thesis successfully.

After I completed data collection form S-Tel Co, I went back to my home city to conduct the rest of data from LICT and Rotana-Afamia. I should mention that my second journey for data collection was supposed to be two months and ten days, but it was extended to five months. This made me under pressure because there is no connection with my university and supervisors in the UK, and it was the time to analyse my data, so I began preparing data in transcripts for analysis.

After I went back the UK, I spent almost two years for data analysis and writing up before I submitted my thesis on 31 January 2014. The reason beyond the long time for data analysis and writing up was the financial difficulties because of economic and political sanctions on Syrians and terrorism phenomenon in Syria under what was called "Arab spring" that destroyed everything in Syria. It should be further noted that any research students have challenges during their research journey, but the most challenge for research students who came from unstable countries was the capability to be more persistent to ensure completing the required degree.

More specifically, I can divide my challenges during my research journey into internal and external challenges. In this regard, I can say I had ability to control most internal challenges that were involved, financial and family challenges, study requirements, and the relationship with supervisors. But the external challenges had negative implications on my study for completing my research degree on time because of the difficulties to control these challenges. These included the lack of security in my home country, terrorism phenomenon, and family safety.

As a result of all above, the multiple challenges that I faced regarding my family, my country, and my personal life while working on this research made me more persistent and perseverant on completing this project. I quote the American author, motivational speaker and Professor Leo Buscaglia (1924-1998), who summarises what I did in my journey during the research period; "There are two big forces at work, external and internal. We have very little control over external forces such as tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, disasters, illness and pain. What really matters is the internal force. How do I respond to those disasters? Over that I have complete control".

After completing my study successfully, this research has installed a deep respect for all people who supported me during my research from Syria and from the UK to complete this dream. Particularly, I thank all participants from the three companies for their time; especially participants who broke policy to help me completing this research. The contribution of top and middle managers at three companies increased the value to this case study research and installed a confidence in the possibility of future research in this topic. The interviews with managers from top and middle management helped me become more confident in my project that cannot be overstated through the quality of data conducted from those levels.

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Appendix A

Interview protocol

Interview Number:
Date:
Time:

1. **Organisational Profile:**

   1.1. Name of the Company:
   1.2. Core of Business:
   1.3. Location (Head office and its departments and Branches):
   1.4.Number of Employees

2. **Interviewee Profile:**

   2.1. Name:
   2.2. Position and Responsibilities:
   2.3. Educational Level (which country):

BSc	**BA**	**MSc**	**MBA**	**PhD**
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section 1: Behavioural requirement and capabilities

1. What behaviours/capabilities do leaders have or need to develop in your company? Why?
2. How does a company develop competencies?
3. What are the competencies that are used in other companies? Why?
4. From you position, how do you describe your leadership competencies compared with the West in terms of the differences and similarities? Why?

Section2: Development methods

5. What development methods does a company adopt for developing its leadership? Why?
6. What are the sources of your development methods and their ingredients?
7. Who instruct to transfer the required leadership development methods in your company? And on what basis is the selection of those programs?
8. Who are targeted, why?
9. Why are not targeted others?
10. From your experience, how do you describe your leadership development methods and activities compared with the West in terms of the differences and similarities? Why?

Section3: Identifying leadership needs for development

11. How do your company identify its leadership behavioural requirements and competencies and their development methods? Could you explain, why?

12. How do you describe your differences and similarities with the West in terms of the tactics used for identifying leadership needs for development? Why?

Section 4: Contextual factors

- **Subtheme: Competitive Strategy**

13. What kind of business strategy does a company adopt? Why?

14. How does the strategy of your company affect leadership development? Could you explain, why?

- **Subtheme: Company Size**

15. How are the required competencies and leadership development methods perceived in your company and other different company sizes? Why?

- **Subtheme: Technology**

16. How does technology influence leadership training and development in your company? Could you give more details why?

- **Subtheme: International Strategy: (multinational, international, domestic strategies)**

17. How does the international strategy affect on leadership development in your company? And why?

- **Subtheme: Sector**

18. How do your company perceive the relationship between its sector types and the type of the leadership competencies and development methods required? Could you give examples why?

- **Subtheme: Organisational Culture**

19. How does organisational culture affect on leadership development in your company? Why?

- **Subtheme: Culture**

20. From your career, how do you think national culture influence your leadership development? Why?

Appendix B

Codebook Extract

Categories and themes	Codes	Q.No
IV. Context	**CO**	
IV. A. Competitive Strategy	**CO-CompStra**	
IV. A. 15. Differentiation, low cost leadership, environment characteristics, leadership needs	CO -StraChara- CompStra	15.
IV. B. Firm Size	**CO-FSiz**	
IV. B. 16. A large number of employees, organisational structure, large size requirements.	CO- SizChara- FSiz	16.
IV. C. Technology	**CO-T**	
IV. C. 17. Poor infrastructure, technology use	CO- TInfrast-T	17.
IV. D. International Strategy	**CO-IntStra**	
IV. D. 18. Balanced international strategy	CO -BalaStra-IntStra	18.
IV. E. Firm Sector	**CO-FSec**	
IV. E. 19. business type , Sector types	CO -Bus/SecT-FSec	19.
IV. F. Organisational Culture	**CO-OrgC**	
IV. F. 20. Balanced organisational culture	CO -BalaC-OrgC	20.
IV. G. National Culture	**CO-NatC**	
IV. G. 21. Wasta Religion Gender Political and economic sanctions Time	CO -Wast-NatC CO -Relig-NatC CO -Gend-NatC CO -PESanc-NatC CO -Tim-NatC	21.

Appendix C

Key research questions to data collection methods

Key research questions	Covering topics	Data sources
1. How is leadership development applied/occurrig in business organisations in the Arab context?	• Leadership development methods/activities	• Interviews with the middle and top management • Reviewing the final report with three participants and academic members
	• Leadership behavioural requirements and capabilities, and	Interview with the middle and top management
	• Description of leadership needs inside the company • Outside the company • The relationship between leadership needs and internal and external environments	• Interviews with the middle and top management • Documents include: minutes of meetings, annual reports, • Reviewing the final report findings with participants and academic members
2. Why is leadership development pursued in Syria/an Arab context? 3. What are the factors influencing leadership development in Arab context?	• Description of o Competitive environment o Companies size o Companies sector o International strategy o Technology o Organisational culture o National culture rules • Description of o Other negative influential factors	• Interviews with the middle and top management • Documents include: minutes of meetings, annual reports, formal studies about the same case, • Reviewing the findings with three participants and academic members

Appendix D

Coded Interview Transcript (Extract)

21. **What kind of business strategy does a company adopt? And How does the strategy of your company affect on leadership development? Could you explain, why?**

Each business strategy has its own environment and requirements to be successful in which it can achieve the company goal (CO-StraPrivc-CompStra). So adopting other leadership competencies and training and development programmes that can't fit with it, it can affect the company reputation and its growth in the market. The application of **the differentiation strategy** for achieving the results required tends to be logical through its support for high-skilled manager, but for now this is questionable in our environment because for us differentiation is more developmental strategy in a stable environment before 2011, and it failed to achieve the outcome required after 2011. (IV. A. 15).

> The relationship between type of business strategy and the company's environment; although differentiation strategy is supporting leadership skills, its application is influenced by the instability
>
> **(IV.A.15:CO-StraChara-CompStra)**

22. **How are the required competencies and leadership development methods perceived in your company and other different company sizes? Why?**

If a company is large, it will have strong leadership style and experiential staff (CO- SizChara- FSiz) that are implemented in all branches as a standard because large company makes everything clear to be understood to everyone, and have **large number of employees** and **organisational structure.** (IV. B. 16).

> The influence of employees and organisational structure on leadership training and development
>
> **(IV. B. 16: CO-SizChara- FSiz)**

23. **How does technology influence leadership training and development in your company? Could you give more details why?**

Weak infrastructure of technology can slow down the development process in any company (CO- TInfrast-T) particularly, HRD including leadership focuses on internet, CD/DVD training programmes, but most companies have technology difficulties regarding internet network. Several managers do not have an experience with laptop and software and even technical principles in management. youth managers have big experience with technology compared with old managers and leaders, so this is the mean problem when going to leadership development programmes because there is **no balance**

> The influence of technology infrastructure and poor use of technology on the application of leadership development
>
> **(IV. C. 17: CO-TInfrast-T).**

between old and young managers in terms of knowledge of how to use technology (CO- TInfrast-T). (IV. C. 17:).

24. How does the international strategy affect on leadership development in your company? And why?

our hotel is sensitive to international strategy because of being international hotel and share the same roles, strategies with our head office, but we insist on our flexibility to change what it should change to ensure our success because each hotel of our company group operates its subsidiaries in different environments that have their own privacy, so some of them accept strict international strategy; while other not, such as Syrian environment (CO -BalaStra-IntStra). So the lack of flexible strategy makes our hotel under risk (IV. D. 18).

Respecting the strategy of the parent company with taking into consideration the privacy of country in which it works.

(IV. D. 18: CO - BalaStra-IntStra).

25. How do your company perceive the relationship between their sector types and the type of the leadership competencies and development methods required? Could you give examples why?

There are **three basic types of firm sectors**: public, for-profit, and non-profit sectors (SecT-FSec), so this can help you understand that each sector has its requirements on which they build their reputation. This illustrates why firm sectors may differ from country to another. For example state sector is given attention by western government in terms of HRD, but this is not seen in the developing countries **(IV. E.19).**

Business type has influence on leadership and its development. The influence of business type on leadership development may differ between oil, car industries, banking, telecommunication, insurance; health care, and our hospitality business type (BusT-FSec) because leadership competencies and their development methods differ from business type to another based on the needs of each business type in terms of location, reaction to business environment, business strategy, and socio-cultural rules, so some business types require their own leadership skills that work best with, and thus this illustrates why we have our own leadership behaviour and capabilities, do not forget offering a high-level service to our guests requires us meeting our staff and job needs and the environment requirements surrounding our hotel (CO -Bus/SecT-FSec). **(IV. E. 19).**

Sector type and business type have their own leadership requirements based on the country characteristics and business environment

(IV. E. 19: CO - Bus/SecT-FSec)

26. How does organisational culture affect leadership development in your company? Why?

Our **organisational culture** tries to be in the middle to ensure its survival, especially in the recent crisis over last two years until now. You know because poor organisational culture ignores its own parent culture and is influenced by national culture of the country in which a company works (CO-BalaC-OrgC), so there is no leadership development in poor culture (IV. F. 20).

27. How do you think national culture affect your leadership development? Why?

The lack of balanced organisational culture between national culture and parent company culture influencing leadership development

(IV. F. 20: CO -BalaC-OrgC)